U.C.D. LIBRARY

The Author's Autograph Edition of Irving's Works will be complete in forty volumes. It is limited to 500 sets, of which this is No. 175

G. P. Putnam's Sons

Author's Autograph Edition

LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY WASHINGTON IRVING

NEW YORK & LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS 1860

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Washington Taking Leave of his Officers.

From a design by F. O. Darley.

Author's Autograph Edition

LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY WASHINGTON IRVING

Volume VIII.

NEW YORK & LONDON G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS 1896

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by
G. P. PUTNAM AND CO.
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for
the Southern District of New York

The Knickerbocker Press
NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK

Life of
George Washington

AUTHOR'S AUTOGRAPH EDITION

Author's Preface.

(As Printed in Volume V. of the Original Edition.)

THE present volume completes a work to which the author had long looked forward as the crowning effort of his literary career.

The idea of writing a life of Washington entered at an early day into his mind. It was especially pressed upon his attention nearly thirty years ago while he was in Europe, by a proposition of the late Mr. Archibald Constable, the eminent publisher of Edinburgh, and he resolved to undertake it as soon as he should return to the United States, and be within reach of the necessary documents. Various circumstances occurred to prevent him from carrying this resolution into prompt effect. It remained, however, a cherished purpose of his heart, which he has at length, though somewhat tardily, accomplished.

The manuscript for the present volume was nearly ready for the press some months since, but the author, by applying himself too closely in his eagerness to finish it, brought on a nervous indisposition, which unfitted him for a time for the irksome but indispensable task of revision. In this he has been kindly assisted by his nephew, Pierre Munro Irving, who had previously aided him in the course of his necessary researches, and who now carefully collated the manuscript with the works, letters, and inedited documents from which the facts had been derived. He has likewise had the kindness to superintend the printing of the volume, and the correction of the proof sheets. Thus aided, the author is enabled to lay the volume before the public.

How far this, the last labor of his pen, may meet with general acceptation is with him a matter of hope rather than of confidence. He is conscious of his own short-comings and of the splendid achievements of oratory of which the character of Washington has recently been made the theme. Grateful, however, for the kindly disposition which has greeted each successive volume, and with a profound sense of the indulgence he has experienced from the public through a long literary career, now extending through more than half a century,

he resigns his last volume to its fate, with a feeling of satisfaction that he has at length reached the close of his task, and with the comforting assurance that it has been with him a labor of love, and as such has to a certain degree carried with it its own reward.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

SUNNYSIDE, *April*, 1859.

Contents.

PAGE

CHAP. I.—News of Peace—Letter of Washington in Behalf of the Army—Cessation of Hostilities Proclaimed — Order of the Cincinnati Formed—Letter of Washington to the State Governors—Mutiny in the Pennsylvania Line —Letter of Washington on the Subject—Tour to the Northern Posts 1

CHAP. II.—The Army to be Discharged—Parting Address of Washington—Evacuation of New York—Parting Scene of Washington with his Officers at New York—Washington Resigns his Commission to Congress — Retires to Mount Vernon 20

CHAP. III.—Washington at Mount Vernon—A Soldier's Repose—Plans of Domestic Life—Kind Offer of the Council of Pennsylvania—Historical Applications—News of Jacob Van Braam—Opening of Spring—Agricultural Life Resumed—Recollections of the Fairfaxes—Meeting of the Order of Cincinnati—Tour of Washington and Dr. Craik to the West—Ideas of Internal Improvement—Parting with Lafayette 34

PAGE

CHAP. IV. — Scheme of Inland Navigation—Shares of Stock Offered to Washington—Declined—Rural Improvements—The Tax of Letter-Writing—The Tax of Sitting for Likenesses — Ornamental Gardening — Management of the Estate—Domestic Life—Visit of Mr. Watson—Reverential Awe Inspired by Washington—Irksome to him—Instances of his Festive Gayety—Of his Laughing—Passion for Hunting Revived—Death of General Greene—His Character—Washington's Regrets and Encomiums—Letters to the French Noblemen 54

CHAP. V. — Washington Doubts the Solidity of the Confederation — Correspondence with John Jay on the Subject—Plan of a Convention of all the States to Revise the Federal System—Washington Heads the Virginia Delegation—Insurrection in Massachusetts—The Convention — A Federal Constitution Organized—Ratified 82

CHAP. VI.—Washington Talked of for the Presidency—His Letters on the Subject Expressing his Reluctance—His Election—His Progress to the Seat of Government—His Reception at New York—The Inauguration . . . 104

CHAP. VII.—The New Government — Domestic and Foreign Relations—Washington's Anxious Position — Its Difficulties — Without Cabinet or Constitutional Advisers—John Jay —Hamilton—His Efficient Support of the

PAGE

Constitution and Theoretic Doubts — James Madison—Knox—His Characteristics . . 128

CHAP. VIII.—Washington's Privacy Beset with Visits of Compliment — Queries as to the Proper Line of Conduct in His Presidential Intercourse—Opinions of Adams and Hamilton—Jefferson as to the Authors of the Minor Forms and Ceremonies—His Whimsical Anecdote of the First Levee—Inaugural Ball . 137

CHAP. IX.—Journey of Mrs. Washington to New York—Honors Paid her in her Progress—Reception at the Seat of Government—The President's Equipage 146

CHAP. X.—Alarming Illness of the President—The Senate Rejects One of his Nominations—His Sensitive Vindication of it—Death of his Mother—Her Character—The Executive Departments Instituted—Selection of Officers for the Treasury and War Departments—Hamilton Instructed to Report a Financial Plan at the Next Session of Congress—Arrangement of the Judiciary Department—Edmund Randolph—Adjournment of Congress—Its Character, by Fisher Ames . . 154

CHAP. XI.—The Department of State Still without a Head—Sketch of Jefferson's Character and Opinions—Deeply Immersed in French Politics at Paris—Gouverneur Morris Abroad—Contrast of his and Jefferson's Views of the French Crisis—News of the French Revolution in America—Popular Excitement—Wash-

PAGE

ington's Cautious Opinion on the Subject—Hamilton's Apprehensive View—Jefferson Offered a Place in the Cabinet as Secretary of State 165

CHAP. XII.—Washington's Journey through the Eastern States—John Hancock—Clashing between the Civil and Municipal Authorities on the President's Entry into Boston—A Contest of Etiquette—Washington's Account of his Entry—His Reception—A New Punctilio—Address of the Cincinnati Society—Return to New York 179

CHAP. XIII.—Colonel John Trumbull—Message to Washington from Lafayette—Jefferson's Embarkation for America—Washington Forwards his Commission as Secretary of State—His Acceptance 188

CHAP. XIV.—Reassembling of Congress—Financial Condition of the Country—Its Debt at Home and Abroad—Debts of the States—Hamilton's Report—Opposition to it—Dr. Stuart's Warning Letter to Washington—His Reply—Jefferson's Arrival at the Seat of Government—New York at that Period—Jefferson Apprehends Monarchical Designs . . 195

CHAP. XV.—The Assumption of the State Debts Discussed—Washington in Favor—A Majority of Two against it—Hamilton's Appeal to Jefferson on the Subject—The Latter Arranges for a Compromise—His Account of it—Adjustment about the Seat of Government

PAGE

—Assumption Carried—Treaty of Peace with the Creeks—Cavillings about Presidential Etiquette —Washington's Defense—Adjournment of Congress—Fancied Harmony of the Cabinet — Jefferson Suspects Hamilton of Finesse in Procuring his Agency in the Assumption 209

CHAP. XVI.—Lafayette at the Head of the Revolution in France—His Letter to Washington —Gouverneur Morris's Opinion of his Position —Washington's dubious and Anxious Views— Presented by Lafayette with the Key of the Bastile—Visits Rhode Island and Mount Vernon 220

CHAP. XVII.—Frontier Difficulties with the Indians —General Harmer's Expedition against Them—Ambuscade of Colonel Hardin's Detachment — Escape of Captain Armstrong —A Second Detachment of Colonel Hardin Compelled to Retreat—Washington's Long Anxiety as to the Result of the Enterprise— Final Tidings 228

CHAP. XVIII.—Congress Reassembles at Philadelphia—Residence of Washington at the New Seat of Government—The State Carriage— Hamilton's Financial Arrangements—Impost and Excise Bill—Passage of a Bill for a National Bank—Jefferson's Objections—Formation of Two Political Parties under Hamilton and Jefferson—Their Different Views—Dissatisfaction of Congress at the Report of

PAGE

Harmer's Expedition—Washington's Address to the Seneca Chiefs—His Desire to Civilize the Savages—Kentucky and Vermont Admitted into the Union—First Congress Expires—A New Expedition Projected against the Hostile Tribes under General St. Clair—Washington's Solemn Warning on Taking Leave of him 234

CHAP. XIX.—Washington's Tour through the Southern States — Letter to Lafayette — Gloomy Picture of French Affairs by Gouverneur Morris—His Allusion to Lafayette—Lafayette Depicts the Troubles of a Patriot Leader — Washington's Reply — Jefferson's Ardent Views of the French Revolution—Distrust of John Adams—His Contributions to Fenno's *Gazette* — Reprint of Paine's *Rights of Man*—Flight and Recapture of Louis XVI.—Jefferson Communicates the News to Washington—His Satisfaction when the King Accepts the Constitution . . 243

CHAP. XX.—Rural Hours at Mount Vernon—Assembling of Second Congress—Washington's Opening Speech — Two Expeditions Organized against the Indians, under Scott and Wilkinson—Their Feeble Result—Third Expedition under St. Clair—His Disastrous Contest and Dismal Retreat—How Washington Received the Intelligence . . . 254

CHAP. XXI.—The Apportionment Bill — Washington's Veto—His Concern at the Growing Asperities of Congress—Intended Retirement

PAGE

—Jefferson's Determination to Retire at the same Time—Remonstrance of Washington—His Request to Madison to Prepare Valedictory—Wayne Appointed to Succeed St. Clair—Congress Adjourns—Washington at Mount Vernon—Suggests Topics for his Farewell Address—Madison's Draft—Jefferson Urges his Continuance 270

CHAP. XXII.—Jefferson's Suspicion—Contemned by Hamilton—Washington's Expostulation—Complains of the Conduct of Freneau's Paper—Hamilton and Randolph Urge him to a Re-election—A Warring Cabinet—Hamilton's Attack on Jefferson—Washington's Healing Admonitions—Replies of the two Secretaries—Continued Hostility to the Excise Law—Washington's Proclamation—Renewed Effort to Allay the Discord in his Cabinet . . 288

CHAP. XXIII.—Washington Unanimously Re-elected—Opening of Session of Congress—Topics of the President's Speech—Abortive Attack upon the Secretary of the Treasury—Washington Installed for his Second Term . 310

CHAP. XXIV.—Gouverneur Morris Minister at the French Court—His Representations of the State of Affairs—Washington's Concern for Lafayette—Jefferson Annoyed at his Forebodings—Overthrow of the French Monarchy—Imprisonment of Lafayette—Jefferson Concerned, but not Discouraged at the Republican Massacre—Washington Shocked—His Letter to the Marchioness Lafayette . . . 316

PAGE

CHAP. XXV.—Washington's Entrance upon his Second Term—Gloomy Auspices—Execution of Louis XVI.—France Declares War against England—Belligerent Excitement in America—Proclamation of Neutrality—French Mission to the United States—Genet Arrives in Charleston—His Reception in Philadelphia—Views of Jefferson and Hamilton—Washington's Dispassionate Opinion 325

CHAP. XXVI.—Genet Presents his Letter of Credence—His Diplomatic Speech — Washington's Conversation with Jefferson—Capture of the Ship *Grange* and other British Vessels—Question of Restitution—Dissatisfaction of Genet—Demands Release of Two American Citizens—Washington's Sensitiveness to the Attacks of the Press—His Unshaken Determination 336

CHAP. XXVII. — Washington Called to Mount Vernon—The Case of the *Little Sarah* Comes up in his Absence—Governor Mifflin Determined to Prevent her Departure—Rage of Genet—Jefferson Urges Detention of the Privateer until the President's Return—Evasive Assurance of Genet—Distrust of Hamilton and Knox — Washington Returns to Philadelphia—A Cabinet Council—Its Determination Communicated to Genet — The Vessel Sails in Defiance of it—Formation of the Democratic Society—The Recall of Genet Determined on — The Ribald Lampoon—Washington's Outburst 345

PAGE

CHAP. XXVIII.—Threatened Dissolution of the Cabinet—Action between the *Ambuscade* and *Boston*—Triumphant Return of the Former to New York—A French Fleet Arrives Same Day — Excitement of the People — Genet arrives in the Midst of it—His Enthusiatic Reception—Is Informed by Jefferson of the Measures for his Recall—His Rage and Reply —Decline of his Popularity 357

CHAP. XXIX.—Neutrality Endangered by Great Britain—Her Ill Advised Measures — Detention of Vessels Bound for France—Impressment of American Seamen — Persistence in Holding the Western Posts — Congress Assembles in December—The President's Opening Speech—His Censure of Genet—The Vice-President's Allusion to it — The Administration in a Minority in the House—Proclamation of Neutrality Sustained—Jefferson's Report—Retires from the Cabinet—His Parting Rebuke to Genet—His Character of Washington 368

CHAP. XXX.—Debate on Jefferson's Report on Commercial Intercourse—A Naval Force Proposed for the Protection of Commerce against Piratical Cruisers—Further Instances of the Audacity of Genet—His Recall—Arrival of his Successor—Irritation Excited by British Captures of American Vessels—Preparations for Defense—Embargo—Intense Excitement at "British Spoliations"—Partisans of France in the Ascendant—A Chance for Accommo-

PAGE

dating Difficulties — Jefferson's Hopes of Reconciliation—The War Cry Uppermost—Washington Determines to send a Special Envoy to the British Government—Jefferson's Letter to Tench Coxe 381

CHAP. XXXI.—James Monroe Appointed Minister to France in Place of Gouverneur Morris Recalled—His Reception—Pennsylvania Insurrection — Proclamation of Washington — Perseverance of the Insurgents—Second Proclamation—The President Proceeds against them—General Morgan—Lawrence Lewis—Washington Arranges a Plan of Military Operations—Returns to Philadelphia, Leaving Lee in Command—Submission of the Insurgents—The President's Letter on the Subject to Jay, Minister at London . . 396

CHAP. XXXII.—Washington's Denunciation of Self-Created Societies — Not Relished by Congress — Campaign of General Wayne—Hamilton Reports a Plan for the Redemption of the Public Debt—And Retires from his Post as Secretary of the Treasury—Is Succeeded by Oliver Wolcott—Resignation of Knox—Succeeded by Timothy Pickering—Close of the Session 409

Illustrations.

PAGE

WASHINGTON TAKING LEAVE OF HIS OFFICERS *Frontispiece*
From a design by F. O. Darley.

THE VERPLANCK HOUSE—WHERE THE SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI WAS ORGANIZED . 8

THE BATTERY AND BOWLING GREEN DURING THE REVOLUTION 28

RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON AT NEW YORK, APRIL 23D, 1789 116
From a painting by J. McNevin.

THE INAUGURATION OF WASHINGTON . . 122

FIRST PRESIDENTIAL MANSION, FRANKLIN SQUARE, NEW YORK 148

JOHN JAY—FIRST CHIEF-JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES 162

JOHN TRUMBULL 188

MAJOR-GENERAL ARTHUR ST. CLAIR . . . 242
Facsimile of a pencil drawing from life by Col. J. Trumbull.

PAGE

GOUVERNEUR MORRIS 316

THE TONTINE COFFEE-HOUSE (CITY EXCHANGE) 364
Redrawn from "Valentine's Manual."

THOMAS JEFFERSON 378
From a painting by G. Stuart.

JAMES MONROE 398
From a painting by J. Vanderlyn.

Life of George Washington

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

Chapter I.

News of Peace—Letter of Washington in Behalf of the Army—Cessation of Hostilities Proclaimed—Order of the Cincinnati Formed—Letter of Washington to the State Governors—Mutiny in the Pennsylvania Line—Letter of Washington on the Subject—Tour to the Northern Posts.

AT length arrived the wished-for news of peace. A general treaty had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January. An armed vessel, the *Triumph*, belonging to the Count d'Estaing's squadron, arrived at Philadelphia from Cadiz, on the 23d of March, bringing a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, to the President of Congress, communicating the intelligence. In a few days Sir Guy Carleton informed Washington

by letter, that he was ordered to proclaim a cessation of hostilities by sea and land.

A similar proclamation, issued by Congress, was received by Washington on the 17th of April. Being unaccompanied by any instructions respecting the discharge of the part of the army with him, should the measure be deemed necessary, he found himself in a perplexing situation.

The accounts of peace received at different times, had raised an expectation in the minds of those of his troops that had engaged "for the war," that a speedy discharge must be the consequence of the proclamation. Most of them could not distinguish between a proclamation of a cessation of hostilities and a definitive declaration of peace, and might consider any further claim on their military services an act of injustice. It was becoming difficult to enforce the discipline necessary to the coherence of an army. Washington represented these circumstances in a letter to the President, and earnestly entreated a prompt determination on the part of Congress, as to what was to be the period of the services of these men, and how he was to act respecting their discharge.

One suggestion of his letter is expressive of his strong sympathy with the patriot soldier, and his knowledge of what formed a matter of

pride with the poor fellows who had served and suffered under him. He urged that, in discharging those who had been engaged "for the war," the non-commissioned officers and soldiers should be allowed to take with them, as their own property and as a gratuity, their arms and accoutrements. "This act," observes he, "would raise pleasing sensations in the minds of these worthy and faithful men, who, from their early engaging in the war at moderate bounties, and from their patient continuance under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly of their country, but have obtained an honorable distinction over those who, with shorter terms, have gained large pecuniary rewards. This, at a comparatively small expense, would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to these distinguished worthies, and the sense they have of their suffering virtues and services. . . .

"These constant companions of their toils, preserved with sacred attention, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children, as honorary badges of bravery and military merit; and would probably be brought forth on some future occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands

of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory."

This letter despatched, he notified in general orders that the cessation of hostilities should be proclaimed at noon on the following day, and read in the evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army, "after which," adds he, "the chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations."

Having noticed that this auspicious day, the 19th of April, completed the eighth year of the war, and was the anniversary of the eventful conflict at Lexington, he went on in general orders, to impress upon the army a proper idea of the dignified part they were called upon to act.

"The generous task for which we first flew to arms being accomplished; the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured, and the characters of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering, and danger, being immortalized by the appellation of *the patriot army*,

nothing now remains, but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying consistency of character, through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to retire from the military theatre with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions."

The letter which he had written to the President produced a resolution in Congress, that the service of the men engaged in the war did not expire until the ratification of the definitive articles of peace; but that the commander-in-chief might grant furloughs to such as he thought proper, and that they should be allowed to take their arms with them.

Washington availed himself freely of this permission: furloughs were granted without stint; the men set out singly or in small parties for their rustic homes, and the danger and inconvenience were avoided of disbanding large masses, at a time, of unpaid soldiery. Now and then were to be seen three or four in a group, bound probably to the same neighborhood, beguiling the way with camp jokes and camp stories. The war-worn soldier was always kindly received at the farm-houses along the road, where he might shoulder his gun and fight over his battles. The men thus dismissed on furlough were never called upon

to rejoin the army. Once at home, they sank into domestic life; their weapons were hung up over their fire-places, military trophies of the Revolution to be prized by future generations.

In the meantime Sir Guy Carleton was making preparations for the evacuation of the city of New York. The moment he had received the royal order for the cessation of hostilities, he had written for all the shipping that could be procured from Europe and the West Indies. As early as the 27th of April a fleet had sailed for different parts of Nova Scotia, carrying off about seven thousand persons, with all their effects. A great part of these were troops, but many were royalists and refugees, exiled by the laws of the United States. They looked forward with a dreary eye to their voyage, "bound," as one of them said, "to a country where there were nine months of winter and three months of cold weather every year."

On the 6th of May a personal conference took place between Washington and Sir Guy at Orangetown, about the transfer of posts in the United States, held by the British troops, and the delivery of all property stipulated by the treaty to be given up to the Americans. On the 8th of May, Egbert Benson, William S. Smith, and Daniel Parker, were commis-

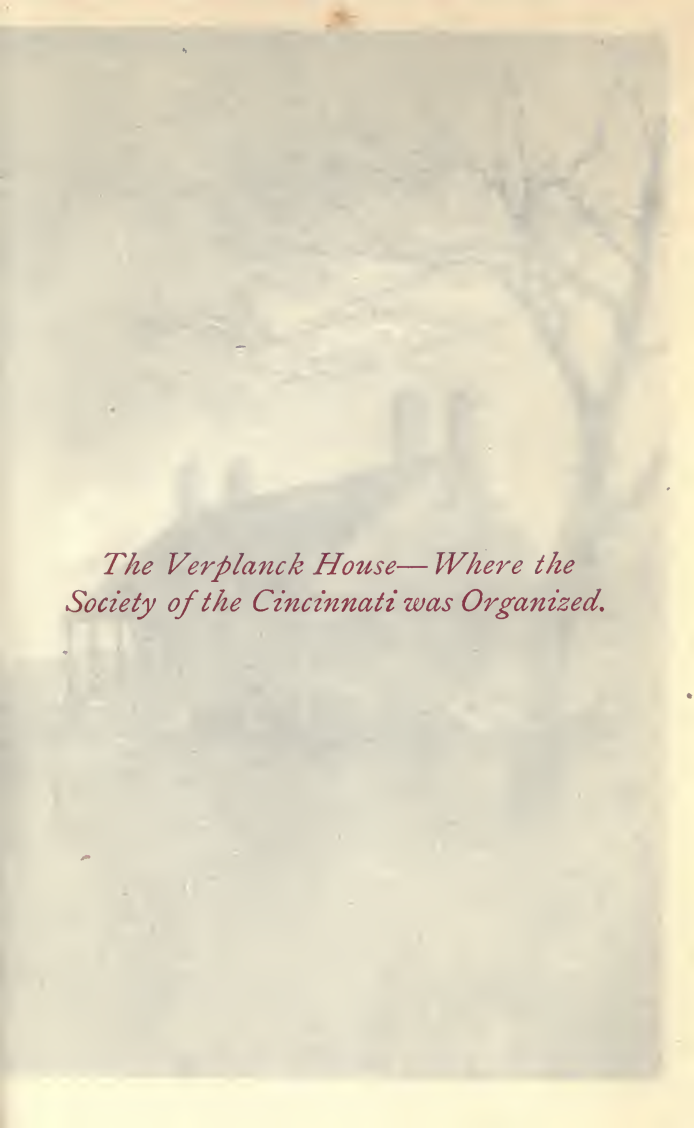
sioned by Congress to inspect and superintend at New York the embarkation of persons and property, in fulfilment of the seventh article of the provisional treaty.

While sadness and despair prevailed among the tories and refugees in New York, the officers in the patriot camp on the Hudson were not without gloomy feelings at the thought of their approaching separation from each other. Eight years of dangers and hardships, shared in common and nobly sustained, had welded their hearts together, and made it hard to rend them asunder. Prompted by such feelings, General Knox, ever noted for generous impulses, suggested, as a mode of perpetuating the friendships thus formed, and keeping alive the brotherhood of the camp, the formation of a society composed of the officers of the army. The suggestion met with universal concurrence, and the hearty approbation of Washington.

Meetings were held, at which the Baron Steuben, as senior officer, presided. A plan was drafted by a committee composed of Generals Knox, Hand, and Huntingdon, and Captain Shaw; and the society was organized at a meeting held on the 13th of May, at the baron's quarters in the old Verplanck House, near Fishkill.

By its formula, the officers of the American army in the most solemn manner combined themselves into one society of friends; to endure as long as they should endure, or any of their eldest male posterity, and in failure thereof, their collateral branches who might be judged worthy of being its supporters and members. In memory of the illustrious Roman, Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, who retired from war to the peaceful duties of the citizen, it was to be called "The Society of the Cincinnati." The objects proposed by it were to preserve inviolate the rights and liberties for which they had contended; to promote and cherish national honor and union between the States; to maintain brotherly kindness toward each other, and extend relief to such officers and their families as might stand in need of it.

In order to obtain funds for the purpose, each officer was to contribute one month's pay, the interest only to be appropriated to the relief of the unfortunate. The general society, for the sake of frequent communications, was to be divided into State societies, and these again into districts. The general society was to meet annually on the first Monday in May, the State societies on each 4th of July, the districts as often as should be agreed on by the State society.



The Verplanck House—Where the Society of the Cincinnati was Organized.

The society was to have an insignia called "The Order of the Cincinnati." It was to be a golden American eagle, bearing on its breast emblematical devices; this was to be suspended by a deep-blue ribbon two inches wide, edged with white; significative of the union of America with France.

Individuals of the respective States, distinguished for patriotism and talents, might be admitted as honorary members for life; their numbers never to exceed a ratio of one to four. The French ministers who had officiated at Philadelphia, and the French admirals, generals, and colonels, who had served in the United States, were to be presented with the insignia of the order, and invited to become members.

Washington was chosen unanimously to officiate as president of it, until the first general meeting, to be held in May, 1784.

On the 8th of June, Washington addressed a letter to the governors of the several States on the subject of the dissolution of the army. The opening of it breathes that aspiration after the serene quiet of private life, which had been his dream of happiness throughout the storms and trials of his anxious career, but the full fruition of which he was never to realize.

"The great object," said he, "for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the service of my country being accomplished, I am now preparing to return to that domestic retirement which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance; a retirement for which I never ceased to sigh, through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose."

His letter then described the enviable condition of the citizens of America. "Sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life; and acknowledged possessors of 'absolute freedom and independency.' This is the time," said he, "of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character forever. This is the favorable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to be-

come the sport of European politics which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes.

"With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak the language of freedom and sincerity without disguise.

"I am aware, however," continues he, modestly, "that those who differ from me in political sentiment may perhaps remark, that I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty, and may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is the result of the purest intention. But the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives; the part I have hitherto acted in life; the determination I have formed of not taking any share in public business hereafter; the ardent desire I feel, and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying, in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government; will, I flatter myself, sooner or later convince my countrymen that I could have no sinister views in delivering, with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address."

He then proceeded ably and eloquently to discuss what he considered the four things

essential to the well-being, and even the existence of the United States as an independent power.

First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head, and a perfect acquiescence of the several States, in the full exercise of the prerogative vested in such a head by the Constitution.

Second. A sacred regard to public justice in discharging debts and fulfilling contracts made by Congress, for the purpose of carrying on the war.

Third. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; in which care should be taken to place the militia throughout the Union on a regular, uniform, and efficient footing. "The militia of this country," said he, "must be considered as the palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility. It is essential, therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole: that the formation and discipline of the militia of the continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements, and military apparatus should be introduced in every part of the United States."

And Fourth. A disposition among the people of the United States to forget local prejudices and policies; to make mutual concessions,

and to sacrifice individual advantages to the interests of the community.

These four things Washington pronounced the pillars on which the glorious character must be supported. "Liberty is the basis; and whosoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country."

We forbear to go into the ample and admirable reasoning with which he expatiates on these heads, and, above all, enforces the sacred inviolability of the Union; they have become familiar with every American mind, and ought to govern every American heart. Nor will we dwell upon his touching appeal on the subject of the half pay and commutation promised to the army, and which began to be considered in the odious light of a pension. "That provision," said he, "should be viewed as it really was—a reasonable compensation offered by Congress, at a time when they had nothing else to give the officers of the army for services then to be performed. It was the only means to prevent a total dereliction of the service. It was a part of their hire. I may be allowed to say it was the price of their blood and of

your independency; it is therefore more than a common debt, it is a debt of honor."

Although we have touched upon but a part of this admirable letter, we cannot omit its affecting close, addressed as it was to each individual governor.

"I have thus freely declared what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the chief magistrate of your State, at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office and all the employments of public life.

"It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your legislature at their next meeting, and that they may be considered the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the divine benediction on it.

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow-citizens

of the United States at large, and particularly for brethren who have served in the field; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind, which are the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without whose example in those things we can never hope to be a happy nation."

While the patriot army, encamped under the eye of Washington, bore their hardships and privations without flinching, or returned quietly to their homes with, as yet, no actual reward but the weapons with which they had vindicated their country's cause, about eighty newly recruited soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, stationed at Lancaster, suddenly mutinied and set off in a body for Philadelphia, to demand redress of fancied grievances from the legislature of the State. Arriving at that city, they were joined by about twelve hundred comrades from the barracks, and proceeded on the 2d of June with beat of drum and fixed bayonets to the State House, where Congress and the supreme executive council of Pennsylvania were in session.

Placing sentinels at every door to prevent egress, they sent in a written message to the

President and council, threatening military violence if their demands were not complied with in the course of twenty minutes.

Though these menaces were directed against the State government, Congress felt itself outraged by being thus surrounded and blockaded for several hours by an armed soldiery. Fearing lest the State of Pennsylvania might not be able to furnish adequate protection, it adjourned to meet within a few days at Princeton; sending information, in the meantime, to Washington of this mutinous outbreak.

The latter immediately detached General Howe with fifteen hundred men to quell the mutiny and punish the offenders; at the same time, in a letter to the President of Congress, he expressed his indignation and distress at seeing a handful of men, "contemptible in numbers and equally so in point of service, and not worthy to be called soldiers," insulting the sovereign authority of the Union, and that of their own State. He vindicated the army at large, however, from the stain the behavior of these men might cast upon it. These were mere recruits, soldiers of a day, who had not borne the heat and burden of the war, and had in reality few hardships to complain of. He contrasted their conduct with that of the soldiers recently furloughed, veterans who had

patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold; who had suffered and bled without a murmur, and who had retired in perfect good order to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts or a farthing of money in their pockets. While he gave vent to his indignation and scorn, roused by the "arrogance and folly and wickedness of the mutineers," he declared that he could not sufficiently admire the fidelity, bravery, and patriotism of the rest of the army.

Fortunately, before the troops under General Howe reached Philadelphia, the mutiny had been suppressed without bloodshed. Several of the mutineers were tried by a court-martial, two were condemned to death, but ultimately pardoned, and four received corporal punishment.

Washington now found his situation at head-quarters irksome; there was little to do, and he was liable to be incessantly teased with applications and demands, which he had neither the means nor power to satisfy. He resolved, therefore, to while away part of the time that must intervene before the arrival of the definitive treaty, by making a tour to the northern and western parts of the State, and visiting the places which had been the theatre of important military transactions. He had another object in view; he desired to facilitate

as far as in his power the operations which would be necessary for occupying, as soon as evacuated by British troops, the posts ceded by the treaty of peace.

Governor Clinton accompanied him on the expedition. They set out by water from Newburgh, ascended the Hudson to Albany, visited Saratoga and the scene of Burgoyne's surrender, embarked on Lake George, where light boats had been provided for them, traversed that beautiful lake so full of historic interest; proceeded to Ticonderoga and Crown Point; and after reconnoitering those eventful posts, returned to Schenectady, whence they proceeded up the valley of the Mohawk River, "to have a view," writes Washington, "of that tract of country which is so much celebrated for the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its situation." Having reached Fort Schuyler, formerly Fort Stanwix, they crossed over to Wood Creek, which empties into Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. They then traversed the country to the head of the eastern branch of the Susquehanna, and viewed Lake Otsego and the portage between that lake and the Mohawk River.

Washington returned to headquarters at Newburgh on the 5th of August, after a tour of at least seven hundred and fifty miles, per-

formed in nineteen days, and for the most part on horseback. In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, written two or three months afterwards, and giving a sketch of his tour through what was, as yet, an unstudied wilderness, he writes: "Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense extent and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt its favors to us with so profuse a hand; would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them. I shall not rest contented till I have explored the western country, and traversed those lines, or a great part of them, which have given bounds to a new empire." The vast advantages of internal communication between the Hudson and the great lakes, which dawned upon Washington's mind in the course of this tour, have since been realized in that grand artery of national wealth, the Erie Canal.

Chapter II.

The Army to be Discharged — Parting Address of Washington — Evacuation of New York—Parting Scene of Washington with his Officers at New York —Washington Resigns his Commission to Congress —Retires to Mount Vernon.

BY a proclamation of Congress, dated 18th of October, all officers and soldiers absent on furlough were discharged from further service; and all others who had engaged to serve during the war, were to be discharged from and after the 3d of November. A small force only, composed of those who had enlisted for a definite time, were to be retained in service until the peace establishment should be organized.

In general orders of November 2d, Washington, after adverting to this proclamation, adds: "It only remains for the commander-in-chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the armies of the

United States, however widely dispersed the individuals who compose them may be, and to bid them an affectionate and a long farewell."

He then goes on to make them one of those paternal addresses which so eminently characterize his relationship with his army, so different from that of any other commander. He takes a brief view of the glorious struggle from which they had just emerged; the unpromising circumstances under which they had undertaken it, and the signal interposition of Providence in behalf of their feeble condition; the unparalleled perseverance of the American armies for eight long years through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, a perseverance which he justly pronounces to be little short of *a standing miracle.*

Adverting then to the enlarged prospects of happiness opened by the confirmation of national independence and sovereignty, and the ample and profitable employments held out in a Republic so happily circumstanced, he exhorts them to maintain the strongest attachment to THE UNION, and to carry with them into civil society the most conciliatory dispositions; proving themselves not less virtuous and useful as citizens, than they had been victorious as soldiers; feeling assured that the private virtues of economy, prudence, and industry would not

be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valor, perseverance, and enterprise were in the field.

After a warm expression of thanks to the officers and men for the assistance he had received from every class, and in every instance, he adds:

"To the various branches of the army the general takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his invariable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power; that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life. He flatters himself, however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done.

"And being now to conclude these his last public orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the armies he has so long had the honor to command, he can only offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those who, under the Divine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others. With these wishes, and this benediction, the commander-in-chief is

about to retire from service. The curtain of separation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed forever."

There was a straightforward simplicity in Washington's addresses to his army; they were so void of tumid phrases or rhetorical embellishments; the counsels given in them were so sound and practicable; the feelings expressed in them so kind and benevolent, and so perfectly in accordance with his character and conduct, that they always had an irresistible effect on the rudest and roughest hearts.

A person who was present at the breaking up of the army, and whom we have had frequent occasion to cite, observes, on the conduct of the troops: "The advice of their beloved commander-in-chief, and the resolves of Congress to pay and compensate them in such manner as the ability of the United States would permit, operated to keep them quiet and prevent tumult, but no description would be adequate to the painful circumstances of the parting scene. Both officers and soldiers, long unaccustomed to the affairs of private life, turned loose on the world to starve, and to become the prey to vulture speculators. Never can that melancholy day be forgotten when friends, companions for seven long years in joy and in sorrow, were torn asunder without the

hope of ever meeting again, and with prospects of a miserable subsistence in future." *

Notwithstanding every exertion had been made for the evacuation of New York, such was the number of persons and the quantity of effects of all kinds to be conveyed away, that the month of November was far advanced before it could be completed. Sir Guy Carleton had given notice to Washington of the time he supposed the different posts would be vacated, that the Americans might be prepared to take possession of them. In consequence of this notice, General George Clinton, at that time Governor of New York, had summoned the members of the State council to convene at East Chester on the 21st of November, for the purpose of establishing civil government in the districts hitherto occupied by the British; and a detachment of troops was marched from West Point to be ready to take possession of the posts as they were vacated.

On the 21st the British troops were drawn in from the oft-disputed post of King's Bridge and from M'Gowan's Pass, also from the various posts on the eastern part of Long Island. Paulus Hook was relinquished on the following day, and the afternoon of the 25th of November was appointed by Sir Guy for the

* Thacher, p. 421.

evacuation of the city and the opposite village of Brooklyn.

Washington, in the meantime, had taken his station at Harlem, accompanied by Governor Clinton, who in virtue of his office, was to take charge of the city. They found there General Knox with the detachment from West Point. Sir Guy Carleton had intimated a wish that Washington would be at hand to take immediate possession of the city, and prevent all outrage, as he had been informed of a plot to plunder the place whenever the king's troops should be withdrawn. He had engaged, also, that the guards of the redoubts on the East River, covering the upper part of the town, should be the first to be withdrawn, and that an officer should be sent to give Washington's advanced guard information of their retiring.

Although Washington doubted the existence of any such plot as that which had been reported to the British commander, yet he took precautions accordingly. On the morning of the 25th the American troops, composed of dragoons, light infantry and artillery, moved from Harlem to the Bowery at the upper part of the city. There they remained until the troops in that quarter were withdrawn, when they marched into the city and took possession, the British embarking from the lower parts.

A formal entry then took place of the military and civil authorities. General Washington and Governor Clinton, with their suites, on horseback, led the procession, escorted by a troop of Westchester cavalry. Then came the lieutenant-governor and members of the council, General Knox and the officers of the army, the speaker of the Assembly, and a large number of citizens on horseback and on foot.

An American lady, who was at that time very young and had resided during the latter part of the war in the city, has given us an account of the striking contrast between the American and British troops. "We had been accustomed for a long time," said she, "to military display in all the finish and finery of garrison life; the troops just leaving us were as if equipped for show, and with their scarlet uniforms and burnished arms, made a brilliant display; the troops that marched in, on the contrary, were ill-clad and weather-beaten, and made a forlorn appearance; but then they were *our* troops, and as I looked at them, and thought upon all they had done and suffered for us, my heart and my eyes were full, and I admired and gloried in them the more, because they were weather-beaten and forlorn."

The city was now a scene of public festivity and rejoicing. The governor gave banquets

to the French ambassador, the commander-in-chief, the military and civil officers, and a large number of the most eminent citizens, and at night the public were entertained by splendid fireworks.

In the course of a few days Washington prepared to depart for Annapolis, where Congress was assembling, with the intention of asking leave to resign his command. A barge was in waiting about noon on the 4th of December at Whitehall Ferry to convey him across the Hudson to Paulus Hook. The principal officers of the army assembled at Fraunces's Tavern in the neighborhood of the ferry, to take a final leave of him. On entering the room, and finding himself surrounded by his old companions in arms, who had shared with him so many scenes of hardship, difficulty, and danger, his agitated feelings overcame his usual self-command. Filling a glass of wine, and turning upon them his benignant but saddened countenance, "With a heart full of love and gratitude," said he, "I now take leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

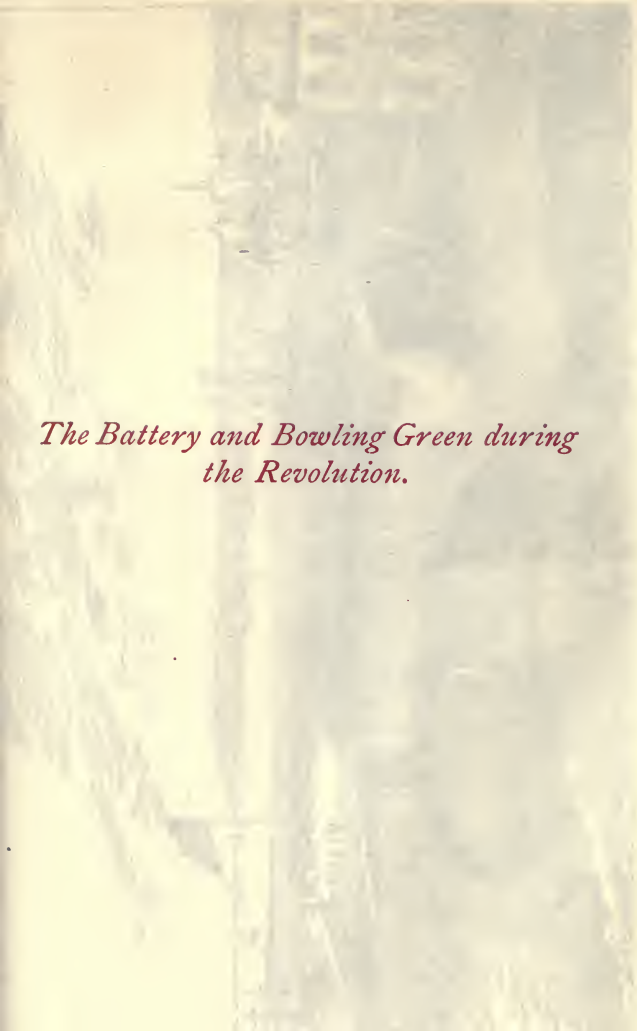
Having drunk this farewell benediction, he added with emotion, "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged

if each of you will come and take me by the hand."

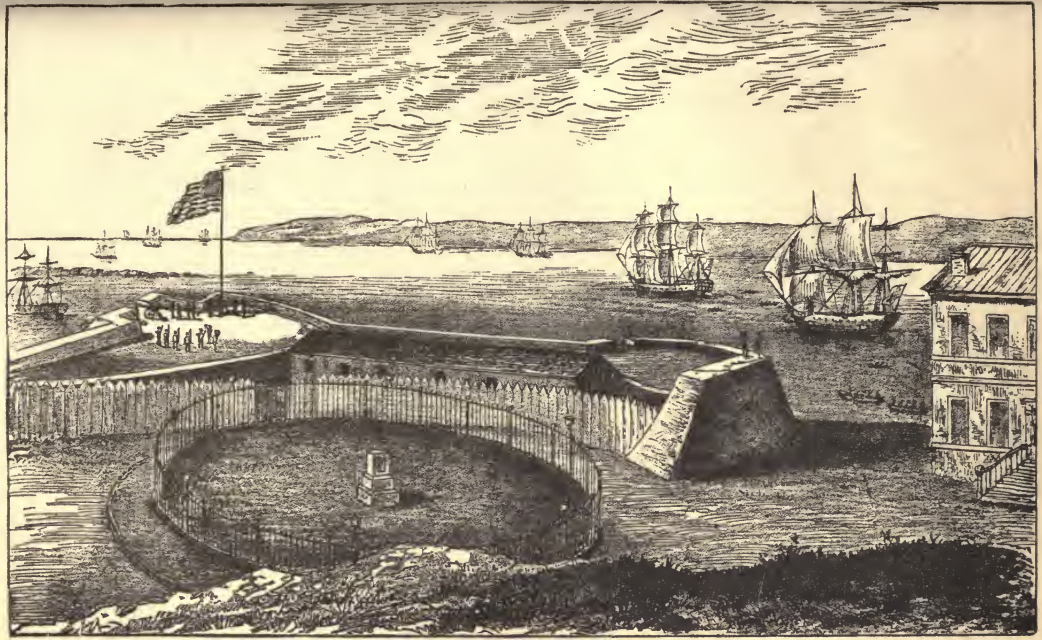
General Knox, who was nearest, was the first to advance. Washington, affected even to tears, grasped his hand and gave him a brother's embrace. In the same affectionate manner he took leave severally of the rest. Not a word was spoken. The deep feeling and manly tenderness of these veterans in the parting moment could find no utterance in words. Silent and solemn they followed their loved commander as he left the room, passed through a corps of light infantry, and proceeded on foot to Whitehall Ferry. Having entered the barge, he turned to them, took off his hat and waved a silent adieu. They replied in the same manner, and having watched the barge until the intervening point of the Battery shut it from sight, returned, still solemn and silent, to the place where they had assembled. *

On his way to Annapolis, Washington stopped for a few days at Philadelphia, where, with his usual exactness in matters of business, he adjusted with the Comptroller of the Treasury his accounts from the commencement of the war down to the 13th of the actual month of December. These were all in his own

*Marshall's *Life of Washington.*



The Battery and Bowling Green during the Revolution.



handwriting, and kept in the cleanest and most accurate manner, each entry being accompanied by a statement of the occasion and object of the charge.

The gross amount was about fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in which were included moneys expended for secret intelligence and service, and in various incidental charges. All this, it must be noted, was an account of money actually expended in the progress of the war; not for arrearage of pay; for it will be recollected Washington accepted no pay. Indeed, on the final adjustment of his accounts, he found himself a considerable loser, having frequently, in the hurry of business, neglected to credit himself with sums drawn from his private purse in moments of exigency.

The schedule of his public account furnishes not the least among the many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example. It stands a touchstone of honesty in office, and a lasting rebuke on that lavish expenditure of the public money, too often heedlessly, if not willfully, indulged by military commanders.

In passing through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, the scenes of his anxious and precarious campaigns, Washington was every-

where hailed with enthusiasm by the people, and greeted with addresses by legislative assemblies and learned and religious institutions. He accepted them all with that modesty inherent in his nature; little thinking that this present popularity was but the early outbreaking of a fame, that was to go on widening and deepening from generation to generation, and extending over the whole civilized world.

Being arrived at Annapolis, he addressed a letter to the President of Congress on the 20th of December, requesting to know in what manner it would be most proper to offer his resignation; whether in writing or at an audience. The latter mode was adopted, and the Hall of Congress appointed for the ceremonial.

A letter from Washington to the Baron Steuben, written on the 23d, concludes as follows: "This is the last letter I shall write while I continue in the service of my country. The hour of my resignation is fixed at twelve to-day, after which I shall become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac."

At twelve o'clock the gallery, and a great part of the floor of the Hall of Congress, were filled with ladies, with public functionaries of the state and with general officers. The members of Congress were seated and covered, as representatives of the sovereignty of the union.

The gentlemen present as spectators were standing and uncovered.

Washington entered, conducted by the Secretary of Congress, and took his seat in a chair appointed for him. After a brief pause the president (General Mifflin) informed him, that "the United States, Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communication."

Washington then rose, and in a dignified and impressive manner, delivered a short address.

"The great events," said he, "on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I now have the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country."

After expressing his obligations to the army in general, and acknowledging the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the confidential officers who had been attached to his person, and composed his family during the war, and whom he especially recommended to the favor of Congress, he continued:

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country

to the protection of Almighty God; and those who have the superintendence of them, to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

"Few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes," says a writer who was present, "as the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress." *

Having delivered his commission into the hands of the president, the latter, in reply to his address, bore testimony to the patriotism with which he had answered to the call of his country, and defended its invaded rights before it had formed alliances, and while it was without funds or a government to support him; to the wisdom and fortitude with which he had conducted the great military contest, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. "You retire," added he, "from the theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens; but the

* Editor of the *Maryland Gazette.*

glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages."

The very next morning Washington left Annapolis, and hastened to his beloved Mount Vernon, where he arrived the same day, on Christmas-eve, in a frame of mind suited to enjoy the sacred and genial festival.

"The scene is at last closed," said he in a letter to Governor Clinton; "I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

Chapter III.

Washington at Mount Vernon—A Soldier's Repose—Plans of Domestic Life—Kind Offer of the Council of Pennsylvania—Historical Applications—News of Jacob Van Braam—Opening of Spring—Agricultural Life Resumed—Recollections of the Fairfaxes—Meeting of the Order of Cincinnati—Tour of Washington and Dr. Craik to the West—Ideas of Internal Improvement—Parting with Lafayette.

FOR some time after his return to Mount Vernon, Washington was in a manner locked up by the ice and snow of an uncommonly rigorous winter, so that social intercourse was interrupted, and he could not even pay a visit of duty and affection to his aged mother at Fredericksburg. But it was enough for him at present that he was at length at home at Mount Vernon. Yet the habitudes of the camp still haunted him; he could hardly realize that he was free from military duties; on waking in the morning he

almost expected to hear the drum going its stirring rounds and beating the reveillé.

"Strange as it may seem," writes he to General Knox, "it is nevertheless true, that it was not until very lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had anything to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a weary traveller must do, who, after treading many a weary step, with a heavy burthen on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing, with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

And in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Free from the bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the

welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries—as if this globe was insufficient for us all; and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life until I sleep with my fathers."

And subsequently, in a letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, inviting her to America to see the country, "young, rude, and uncultivated as it is," for the liberties of which her husband had fought, bled, and acquired much glory, and where everybody admired and loved him, he adds: "I am now enjoying domestic ease under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig-tree, in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins about me. . . . Come, then, let me entreat you, and call my cottage your own; for your doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility;

and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles."

During the winter storms, he anticipates the time when the return of the sun will enable him to welcome his friends and companions in arms to partake of his hospitality; and lays down his unpretending plan of receiving the curious visitors who are likely to throng in upon him. "My manner of living," writes he to a friend, "is plain, and I do not mean to be put out of it. A glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready; and such as will be content to partake of them, are always welcome. Those who expect more will be disappointed."

Some degree of economy was necessary, for his financial concerns had suffered during the war, and the products of his estate had fallen off during his long absence.

In the meantime the supreme council of Pennsylvania, properly appreciating the disinterestedness of his conduct, and aware that popular love and popular curiosity would attract crowds of visitors to Mount Vernon, and subject him to extraordinary expenses, had instructed their delegates in Congress to call the attention of that body to these circum-

stances, with a view to produce some national reward for his eminent services. Before acting upon these instructions, the delegates were directed to send a copy of them to Washington for his approbation.

He received the document while buried in accounts and calculations, and when, had he been of mercenery disposition, the offered intervention in his favor would have seemed most seasonable; but he at once most gratefully and respectfully declined it, jealously maintaining the satisfaction of having served his country at the sacrifice of his private interests.

Applications began to be made to him by persons desirous of writing the history of the Revolution, for access to the public papers in his possession. He excused himself from submitting to their inspection those relative to the occurrences and transactions of his late command, until Congress should see fit to open their archives to the historian.

His old friend, Dr. Craik, made a similar application to Washington in behalf of a person who purposed to write his memoirs. He replied, that any memoir of his life distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt his feelings than flatter his pride, while he could not furnish the

papers and information connected with it without subjecting himself to the imputation of vanity, adding: "I had rather leave it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than, by any act of mine, to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me."

It was a curious circumstance, that scarce had Washington retired from the bustle of arms and hung up his sword at Mount Vernon, when he received a letter from the worthy who had first taught him the use of that sword in these very walls. In a word, Jacob Van Braam, his early teacher of the sword exercise, his fellow-campaigner and unlucky interpreter in the affair of the Great Meadows, turned up once more. His letter gave a glance over the current of his life. It would appear that after the close of the French war, he had been allowed half pay in consideration of his services and misadventures; and, in process of time, had married, and settled on a farm in Wales with his wife and his wife's mother. He had carried with him to England a strong feeling in favor of America, and on the breaking out of the Revolution had been very free, and, as he seemed to think, eloquent and effective in speaking in all companies and at country meetings against the American war. Suddenly, as if to stop his mouth, he received

orders from Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, to join his regiment (the 60th), in which he was appointed eldest captain in the 3d battalion. In vain he pleaded his rural occupations; his farm cultivated at so much cost, for which he was in debt, and which must go to ruin should he abandon it so abruptly. No excuse was admitted—he must embark and sail for East Florida, or lose his half pay. He accordingly sailed for St. Augustine in the beginning of 1776, with a couple of hundred recruits picked up in London, resolving to sell out of the army on the first opportunity. By a series of cross-purposes he was prevented from doing so until 1779, having in the interim made a campaign in Georgia. "He quitted the service," he adds, "with as much pleasure as ever a young man entered it."

He then returned to England and took up his residence in Devonshire; but his invincible propensity to talk against the ministry made his residence there uncomfortable. His next move, therefore, was to the old fertile province of Orleannois in France, where he was still living near Malesherbes, apparently at his ease, enjoying the friendship of the distinguished personage of that name, and better versed, it is to be hoped in the French language than

when he officiated as interpreter in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. The worthy major appeared to contemplate with joy and pride the eminence to which his early pupil in the sword exercise had attained.

"Give me leave, sir, before I conclude," writes he, "to pour out the sentiments of my soul in congratulations for your successes in the American contest; and in wishing you a long life, to enjoy the blessing of a great people whom you have been the chief instrument in freeing from bondage."

So disappears from the scene one of the earliest personages of our history.

As spring advanced, Mount Vernon, as had been anticipated, began to attract numerous visitors. They were received in the frank, unpretending style Washington had determined upon. It was truly edifying to behold how easily and contentedly he subsided from the authoritative commander-in-chief of armies, into the quiet country gentleman. There was nothing awkward or violent in the transition. He seemed to be in his natural element. Mrs. Washington, too, who had presided with quiet dignity at headquarters, and cheered the wintry gloom of Valley Forge with her presence, presided with equal amenity and grace at the simple board of Mount Vernon. She had a

cheerful good sense that always made her an agreeable companion, and was an excellent manager. She has been remarked for an inveterate habit of knitting. It had been acquired, or at least fostered, in the wintry encampments of the Revolution, where she used to set an example to her lady visitors, by diligently plying her needles, knitting stockings for the poor destitute soldiery.

In entering upon the out-door management of his estate, Washington was but doing in person what he had long been doing through others. He had never virtually ceased to be the agriculturist. Throughout all his campaigns he had kept himself informed of the course of rural affairs at Mount Vernon. By means of maps on which every field was laid down and numbered, he was enabled to give directions for their several cultivation, and receive accounts of their several crops. No hurry of affairs prevented a correspondence with his overseer or agent, and he exacted weekly reports. Thus his rural were interwoven with his military cares; the agriculturist was mingled with the soldier; and those strong sympathies with the honest cultivators of the soil, and that paternal care of their interests to be noted throughout his military career, may be ascribed, in a great measure, to the sweetening

influences of Mount Vernon. Yet as spring returned, and he resumed his rides about the beautiful neighborhood of this haven of his hopes, he must have been mournfully sensible, now and then, of the changes which time and events had effected there.

The Fairfaxes, the kind friends of his boyhood, and social companions of his riper years, were no longer at hand to share his pleasures and lighten his cares. There were no more hunting dinners at Belvoir. He paid a sad visit to that happy resort of his youth, and contemplated with a mournful eye its charred ruins, and the desolation of its once ornamented grounds. George William Fairfax, its former possessor, was in England; his political principles had detained him there during the war and part of his property had been sequestered; still, though an exile, he continued in heart a friend to America, his hand had been open to relieve the distresses of Americans in England, and he kept up a cordial correspondence with Washington.

Old Lord Fairfax, the Nimrod of Greenway Court, Washington's early friend and patron, with whom he had first learned to follow the hounds, had lived on in a green old age at his sylvan retreat in the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah; popular with his neighbors and

unmolested by the whigs, although frank and open in his adherence to Great Britain. He had attained his ninety-second year when tidings of the surrender of Yorktown wounded the national pride of the old cavalier to the quick, and snapped the attenuated thread of his existence. *

The time was now approaching when the first general meeting of the Order of Cincinnati was to be held, and Washington saw with deep concern a popular jealousy awakened concerning it. Judge Burke, of South Carolina, had denounced it in a pamphlet as an attempt to elevate the military above the civil classes, and

*So, at least, records in homely prose and verse a reverend historiographer of Mount Vernon. "When old Lord Fairfax heard that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black waiter, 'Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die.'"

"Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And thus to bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

"There oft he called on Britain's name,
And oft he wept full sore,
Then sighed—thy will, O Lord, be done—
And word spake never more."

See Weems's *Life of Washington.*

to institute an order of nobility. The legislature of Massachusetts sounded an alarm that was echoed in Connecticut, and prolonged from State to State. The whole Union was put on its guard against this effort to form a hereditary aristocracy out of the military chiefs and powerful families of the several States.

Washington endeavored to allay this jealousy. In his letters to the presidents of the State societies, notifying the meeting which was to be held in Philadelphia on the 1st of May, he expressed his earnest solicitude that it should be respectable for numbers and abilities, and wise and deliberate in its proceedings, so as to convince the public that the objects of the institution were patriotic and trustworthy.

The society met at the appointed time and place. Washington presided, and by his sagacious counsels effected modifications of its constitution. The hereditary principle, and the power of electing honorary members, were abolished, and it was reduced to the harmless, but highly respectable footing on which it still exists.

In notifying the French military and naval officers included in the society of the changes which had taken place in its constitution, he expressed his ardent hopes that it would render permanent those friendships and connections

which had happily taken root between the officers of the two nations. All clamors against the order now ceased. It became a rallying place for old comrades in arms, and Washington continued to preside over it until his death.

In a letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, for whom he felt an especial regard, after inviting him to the meeting, he adds: "I will only repeat to you the assurances of my friendship, and of the pleasure I should feel in seeing you in the shade of those trees which my hands have planted; and which, by their rapid growth, at once indicate a knowledge of my declining years, and their disposition to spread their mantles over me, before I go hence to return no more."

On the 17th of August he was gladdened by having the Marquis de Lafayette under his roof, who had recently arrived from France. The marquis passed a fortnight with him, a loved and cherished guest, at the end of which he departed for a time, to be present at the ceremony of a treaty with the Indians.

Washington now prepared for a tour to the west of the Appalachian Mountains, to visit his lands on the Ohio and Kanawha rivers. Dr. Craik, the companion of his various campaigns, and who had accompanied him in 1770 on a similar tour, was to be his fellow-traveller.

The way they were to travel may be gathered from Washington's directions to the doctor: "You will have occasion to take nothing from home but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper to make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either at my place on the Youghiogheny or Fort Pitt, measures for this purpose having already been taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want."

This soldier-like tour, made in hardy military style, with tent, pack-horses, and frugal supplies, took him once more among the scenes of his youthful expeditions when a land surveyor in the employ of Lord Fairfax, a leader of Virginia militia, or an aide-de-camp of the unfortunate Braddock. A veteran now in years, and a general renowned in arms, he soberly permitted his steed to pick his way across the mountains by the old military route, still called Braddock's Road, over which he had spurred in the days of youthful ardor. His original intention had been to survey and inspect his lands on the Monongahela River; then to descend the Ohio to the Great Kanawha, where also he had large tracts of wild land.

On arriving on the Monongahela, however, he heard such accounts of discontent and irritation among the Indian tribes, that he did not consider it prudent to venture among them. Some of his land on the Monongahela was settled; the rest was in the wilderness, and of little value in the present unquiet state of the country. He abridged his tour, therefore; proceeded no farther west than the Monongahela; ascended that river, and then struck southward through the wild, unsettled regions of the Alleghanies, until he came out into the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton. He returned to Mount Vernon on the 4th of October; having, since the 1st of September, travelled on horseback six hundred and eighty miles, for a great part of the time in wild, mountainous country, where he was obliged to encamp at night. This, like his tour to the northern forts with Governor Clinton, gave proof of his unfailing vigor and activity.

During all this tour he had carefully observed the course and character of the streams flowing from the west into the Ohio, and the distance of their navigable parts from the head navigation of the rivers east of the mountains, with the nearest and best portage between them. For many years he had been convinced of the practicability of an easy and short communica-

tion between the Potomac and James rivers, and the waters of the Ohio, and thence on to the great chain of lakes, and of the vast advantages that would result therefrom to the States of Virginia and Maryland. He had even attempted to set a company on foot to undertake at their own expense the opening of such a communication, but the breaking out of the Revolution had put a stop to the enterprise. One object of his recent tour was to make observations and collect information on the subject; and all that he had seen and heard quickened his solicitude to carry the scheme into effect.

Political as well as commercial interests, he conceived, were involved in the enterprise. He had noticed that the flanks and rear of the United States were possessed by foreign and formidable powers, who might lure the Western people into a trade and alliance with them. The Western States, he observes, stood as it were upon a pivot, so that the touch of a feather might turn them any way. They had looked down the Mississippi and been tempted in that direction by the facilities of sending everything down the stream; whereas they had no means of coming to us but by long land transportations and rugged roads. The jealous and untoward disposition of the Spaniards, it was

true, almost barred the use of the Mississippi; but they might change their policy, and invite trade in that direction. The retention by the British government, also, of the posts of Detroit, Niagara, and Oswego, though contrary to the spirit of the treaty, shut up the channel of trade in that quarter. These posts, however, would eventually be given up; and then, he was persuaded, the people of New York would lose no time in removing every obstacle in the way of a water communication; and "I shall be mistaken," said he, "if they do not build vessels for the navigation of the lakes, which will supersede the necessity of coasting on either side."

It behooved Virginia, therefore, to lose no time in availing herself of the present favorable conjuncture to secure a share of western trade by connecting the Potomac and James rivers with the waters beyond the mountains. The industry of the western settlers had hitherto been checked by the want of outlets to their products, owing to the before-mentioned obstacles: "But smooth the road," said he, "and make easy the way for them, and then see what an influx of articles will pour upon us; how amazingly our exports will be increased by them, and how amply all shall be compensated for any trouble and expense we may encounter to effect it."

Such were some of the ideas ably and amply set forth by him in a letter to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, who, struck with his plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, laid the letter before the State Legislature. The favor with which it was received induced Washington to repair to Richmond and give his personal support to the measure. He arrived there on the 15th of November. On the following morning a committee of five members of the House of Assembly, headed by Patrick Henry, waited on him in behalf of that body, to testify their reverence for his character and affection for his person, and their sense of the proofs given by him, since his return to private life, that no change of situation could turn his thoughts from the welfare of his country. The suggestions of Washington in his letter to the governor, and his representations, during this visit to Richmond, gave the first impulse to the great system of internal improvements since pursued throughout the United States.

At Richmond he was joined by the Marquis de Lafayette; who since their separation had accompanied the commissioners to Fort Schuyler, and been present at the formation of a treaty with the Indians; after which he had made a tour of the Eastern States, "crowned

everywhere," writes Washington, "with wreaths of love and respect." *

They returned together to Mount Vernon, where Lafayette again passed several days, a cherished inmate of the domestic circle.

When his visit was ended, Washington, to defer the parting scene, accompanied him to Annapolis. On returning to Mount Vernon, he wrote a farewell letter to the marquis, bordering more upon the sentimental than almost any other in his multifarious correspondence.

"In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I have travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you? And though I wished to answer No, my fears answered Yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years climbing, and that, though I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon

* Letter of Washington to the Marchioness de Lafayette.

expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently, to my prospect of ever seeing you again."

Chapter IV.

Scheme of Inland Navigation—Shares of Stock Offered to Washington—Declined—Rural Improvements—The Tax of Letter-Writing—The Tax of Sitting for Likenesses—Ornamental Gardening—Management of the Estate—Domestic Life—Visit of Mr. Watson—Reverential Awe Inspired by Washington—Irksome to him—Instances of his Festive Gayety—Of his Laughing—Passion for Hunting Revived—Death of General Greene—His Character—Washington's Regrets and Encomiums—Letters to the French Noblemen.

WASHINGTON'S zeal for the public good had now found a new channel; or, rather, his late tours into the interior of the Union had quickened ideas long existing in his mind on the subject of internal navigation. In a letter to Richard Henry Lee, recently chosen President of Congress, he urged it upon his attention; suggesting that the western waters should be explored, their navigable capabili-

ties ascertained, and that a complete map should be made of the country; that in all grants of land by the United States, there should be a reserve made for special sale of all mines, mineral and salt springs; that a medium price should be adopted for the western lands, sufficient to prevent monopoly, but not to discourage useful settlers. He had a salutary horror of "land jobbers" and "roaming speculators," prowling about the country like wolves; marking and surveying valuable spots to the great disquiet of the Indian tribes. "The spirit of emigration is great," said he; "people have got impatient, and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either."

In the latter part of December he was at Annapolis, at the request of the Assembly of Virginia, to arrange matters with the Assembly of Maryland respecting the communication between the Potomac and the western waters. Through his indefatigable exertions two companies were formed under the patronage of the governments of these States, for opening the navigation of the Potomac and James rivers, and he was appointed president of both. By a unanimous vote of the Assembly of Virginia, fifty shares in the Potomac, and one hundred

in the James River Company, were appropriated for his benefit, to the end that, while the great works he had promoted would remain monuments of his glory, they might also be monuments of the gratitude of his country. The aggregate amount of these shares was about forty thousand dollars.

Washington was exceedingly embarrassed by the appropriation. To decline so noble and unequivocal a testimonial of the good opinion and good-will of his countrymen, might be construed into disrespect, yet he wished to be perfectly free to exercise his judgment and express his opinions in the matter, without being liable to the least suspicion of interested motives. It had been his fixed determination, also, when he surrendered his military command, never to hold any other office under government to which emolument might become a necessary appendage. From this resolution his mind had never swerved.

While, however, he declined to receive the proffered shares for his own benefit, he intimated a disposition to receive them in trust, to be applied to the use of some object or institution of a public nature. His wishes were complied with, and the shares were ultimately appropriated by him to institutions devoted to public education. Yet, though the love for

his country would thus interfere with his love for his home, the dream of rural retirement at Mount Vernon still went on.

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs," he says, in a letter to a friend in England, "the better I am pleased with them; insomuch that I can nowhere find so much satisfaction as in those innocent and useful pursuits. While indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect, how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vainglory that can be acquired from ravaging it by the most uninterrupted career of conquest."

"How pitiful, in the age of reason and religion, is that false ambition which desolates the world with fire and sword for the purpose of conquest and fame, compared to the milder virtues of making our neighbors and our fellow-men as happy as their frail convictions and perishable natures will permit them to be."

He had a congenial correspondent in his quondam brother-soldier, Governor Clinton of New York, whose spear, like his own, had been turned into a pruning-hook.

"Whenever the season is proper and an opportunity offers," writes he to the governor, "I shall be glad to receive the balsam-trees or

others which you may think curious and exotic with us, as I am endeavoring to improve the grounds about my house in this way." He recommends to the governor's care certain grape-vines of the choicest kinds for the table, which an uncle of the Chevalier de Luzerne had engaged to send from France, and which must be about to arrive at New York. He is literally going to sit under his own vine and his own fig-tree, and devote himself to the quiet pleasures of rural life.

At the opening of the year (1785) the entries in his diary show him diligently employed in preparations to improve his groves and shrubbery. On the 10th of January he notes that the white thorn is full in berry. On the 20th he begins to clear the pine-groves of undergrowth.

In February he transplants ivy under the walls of the garden to which it still clings. In March he is planting hemlock-trees, that most beautiful species of American evergreen, numbers of which had been brought hither from Occoquan. In April he is sowing holly berries in drills, some adjoining a green-brier hedge on the north side of the garden-gate; others in a semicircle on the lawn. Many of the holly bushes thus produced are still flourishing about the place in full vigor. He had learnt

the policy, not sufficiently adopted in our country, of clothing his ornamented grounds as much as possible with evergreens, which resist the rigors of our winter, and keep up a cheering verdure throughout the year. Of the trees fitted for shade in pasture-land he notes the locust, maple, black mulberry, black walnut, black gum, dogwood, and sassafras, none of which, he observes, materially injure the grass beneath them.

Is then for once a soldier's dream realized? Is he in perfect enjoyment of that seclusion from the world and its distractions, which he had so often pictured to himself amid the hardships and turmoils of the camp? Alas, no! The "post," that "herald of a noisy world," invades his quiet and loads his table with letters, until correspondence becomes an intolerable burden.

He looks in despair at the daily accumulating mass of unanswered letters. "Many mistakenly think," writes he, "that I am retired to ease, and to that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been obliged to write so much myself, as I have done since my retirement." * Again, "It is not the letters

* Letter to Richard Henry Lee.

from my friends which give me trouble, or add aught to my perplexity. It is references to old matters, with which I have nothing to do; applications which often cannot be complied with; inquiries which would require the pen of a historian to satisfy; letters of compliment as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the commonplace business which employs my pen and my time often disagreeably. These, with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences."

From much of this drudgery of the pen he was subsequently relieved by Mr. Tobias Lear, a young gentleman of New Hampshire, a graduate of Harvard College, who acted as his private secretary, and at the same time took charge of the instruction of the two children of the late Mr. Parke Custis, whom Washington had adopted.

There was another tax imposed by his celebrity upon his time and patience. Applications were continually made to him to sit for his likeness. The following is his sportive reply to Mr. Francis Hopkinson, who applied in behalf of Mr. Pine:

"'*In for a penny in for a pound*,' is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of

the painters' pencil, that I am altogether at their beck, and sit 'like Patience on a monument,' whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish. At first I was impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation as a colt is under the saddle. The next time I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now no dray-horse moves more readily to his thill, than I to the painter's chair. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that I yield a ready obedience to your request, and to the views of Mr. Pine."

It was not long after this that M. Houdon, an artist of great merit, chosen by Mr. Jefferson and Dr. Franklin, arrived from Paris, to make a study of Washington for a statue for the Legislature of Virginia. He remained a fortnight at Mount Vernon, and having formed his model, took it with him to Paris, where he produced that excellent statue and likeness, to be seen in the State House in Richmond, Virginia.

Being now in some measure relieved from the labors of the pen, Washington had more time to devote to his plan for ornamental cultivation of the grounds about his dwelling.

We find in his diary noted down with curi-

ous exactness, each day's labor and the share he took in it; his frequent rides to the Mill Swamp; the Dogue Creek; the "Plantation of the Neck," and the other places along the Potomac in quest of young elms, ash-trees, white thorn, crab-apples, maples, mulberries, willows, and lilacs; the winding walks which he lays out, and the trees and shrubs which he plants along them. Now he sows acorns and buck-eye nuts brought by himself from the Monongahela; now he opens vistas through the Pine Grove, commanding distant views through the woodlands; and now he twines round his columns scarlet honeysuckles, which his gardener tells him will blow all the summer.

His care-worn spirit freshens up in these employments. With him Mount Vernon is a kind of idyl. The transient glow of poetical feeling which once visited his bosom, when in boyhood he rhymed beneath its groves, seems about to return once more; and we please ourselves with noting among the trees set out by him, a group of young horse-chestnuts from Westmoreland, his native county, the haunt of his schoolboy days; which had been sent to him by Colonel Lee (Light-Horse Harry), the son of his "lowland beauty."

A diagram of the plan in which he had laid

out his grounds, still remains among his papers at Mount Vernon; the places are marked on it for particular trees and shrubs. Some of those trees and shrubs are still to be found in the places thus assigned to them. In the present neglected state of Mount Vernon, its walks are overgrown, and vegetation runs wild; but it is deeply interesting still to find traces of these toils in which Washington delighted, and to know that many of the trees which gave it its present umbrageous beauty were planted by his hand.

The ornamental cultivation of which we have spoken, was confined to the grounds appertaining to what was called the mansion-house farm; all but his estate included four other farms, lying contiguous, and containing three thousand two hundred and sixty acres; each farm having its bailiff or overseer, with a house for his accommodation, barns and out-houses for the produce, and cabins for the negroes. On a general map of the estate, drawn out by Washington himself, these farms were all laid down accurately and their several fields numbered; he knew the soil and local qualities of each, and regulated the culture of them accordingly.

In addition to these five farms there were several hundred acres of fine woodland, so

that the estate presented a beautiful diversity of land and water. In the stables near the mansion-house were the carriage and saddle horses, of which he was very choice; on the four farms there were 54 draft horses, 12 mules, 317 head of black cattle, 360 sheep, and a great number of swine, which last ran at large in the woods.

He now read much on husbandry and gardening, and copied out treatises on those subjects. He corresponded also with the celebrated Arthur Young, from whom he obtained seeds of all kinds, improved ploughs, plans for laying out farm-yards, and advice on various parts of rural economy.

"Agriculture," writes he to him, "has ever been among the most favored of my amusements, though I have never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years' total inattention to it has added nothing to a knowledge, which is best understood from practice; but with the means you have been so obliging as to furnish me, I shall return to it, though rather late in the day, with more alacrity than ever."

In the management of his estate he was remarkably exact. No negligence on the part of the overseers or those under them was passed unnoticed. He seldom used many words on

the subject of his plans; rarely asked advice; but, when once determined, carried them directly and silently into execution; and was not easily dissuaded from a project when once commenced.

We have shown in a former chapter, his mode of apportioning time at Mount Vernon, prior to the Revolution. The same system was, in a great measure, resumed. His active day began some time before the dawn. Much of his correspondence was despatched before breakfast, which took place at half-past seven. After breakfast he mounted his horse which stood ready at the door, and rode out to different parts of his estate, as he used to do to various parts of the camp, to see that all was right at the outposts, and every one at his duty. At half-past two he dined.

If there was no company he would write until dark, or, if pressed by business, until nine o'clock in the evening; otherwise he read in the evening or amused himself with a game of whist.

His secretary, Mr. Lear, after two years' residence in the family on the most confidential footing, says: "General Washington is, I believe, the only man of an exalted character who does not lose some part of his respectability by an intimate acquaintance. I have

never found a single thing that could lessen my respect for him. A complete knowledge of his honesty, uprightness, and candor in all his private transactions, has sometimes led me to think him more than a man."

The children of Parke Custis formed a lively part of his household. He was fond of children and apt to unbend with them. Miss Custis, recalling in after life the scenes of her childhood, writes: "I have sometimes made him laugh most heartily from sympathy with my joyous and extravagant spirits"; she observes, however, that "he was a silent, thoughtful man. He spoke little generally; never of himself. I never heard him relate a single act of his life during the war. I have often seen him perfectly abstracted, his lips moving; but no sound was perceptible."

An observant traveller, Mr. Elkanah Watson, who visited Mount Vernon in the winter of 1785, bearer of a letter of introduction from General Greene and Colonel Fitzgerald, gives a home picture of Washington in his retirement. Though sure that his credentials would secure him a respectful reception, he says: "I trembled with awe, as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity, and with

that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the character of a soldier and an eminent private gentleman. He soon put me at my ease, by unbending in a free and affable conversation.

"The cautious reserve which wisdom and policy dictated, whilst engaged in rearing the glorious fabric of our independence, was evidently the result of consummate prudence and not characteristic of his nature. I observed a peculiarity in his smile, which seemed to illuminate his eye; his whole countenance beamed with intelligence, while it commanded confidence and respect.

"I found him kind and benignant in the domestic circle; revered and beloved by all around him; agreeably social, without ostentation; delighting in anecdote and adventures; without assumption; his domestic arrangements harmonious and systematic. His servants seemed to watch his eye, and anticipate his every wish; hence a look was equivalent to a command. His servant Billy, the faithful companion of his military career, was always at his side. Smiling content animated and beamed on every countenance in his presence."

In the evening Mr. Watson sat conversing for a full hour with Washington after all the family had retired, expecting, perhaps, to hear him fight over some of his battles; but, if so,

he was disappointed, for he observes: "He modestly waived all allusions to the events in which he had acted so glorious and conspicuous a part. Much of his conversation had reference to the interior country, and to the opening of the navigation of the Potomac by canals and locks, at the Seneca, the Great and Little Falls. His mind appeared to be deeply absorbed by that object, then in earnest contemplation."

Mr. Watson had taken a severe cold, in the course of a harsh winter journey, and coughed excessively. Washington pressed him to take some remedies, but he declined. After retiring for the night his coughing increased. "When some time had elapsed," writes he, "the door of my room was gently opened, and, on drawing my bed curtains, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression. This little incident, occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

The late Bishop White, in subsequent years, speaking of Washington's unassuming manners, observes: "I know no man who so

carefully guarded against the discoursing of himself or of his acts, or of anything that pertained to him; and it has occasionally occurred to me when in his company, that, if a stranger to his person were present, he would never have known from anything said by him that he was conscious of having distinguished himself in the eye of the world."

An anecdote is told of Washington's conduct while commander-in-chief, illustrative of his benignant attention to others, and his freedom from all assumption. While the army was encamped at Morristown, he one day attended a religious meeting where divine service was to be celebrated in the open air. A chair had been set out for his use. Just before the service commenced, a woman bearing a child in her arms approached. All the seats were occupied. Washington immediately rose, placed her in the chair which had been assigned to him, and remained standing during the whole service.*

The reverential awe which his deeds and elevated position threw around him was often a source of annoyance to him in private life; especially when he perceived its effect upon the young and gay. We have been told of a case in point, when he made his appearance at a private ball, where all were enjoying

* MS. notes of the Rev. Joseph F. Tuttle.

themselves with the utmost glee. The moment he entered the room the buoyant mirth was checked; the dance lost its animation; every face was grave; every tongue was silent. He remained for a time, endeavoring to engage in conversation with some of the young people, and to break the spell; finding it in vain, he retired sadly to the company of the elders in an adjoining room, expressing his regret that his presence should operate as such a damper. After a little while light laughter and happy voices again resounded from the ballroom; upon which he rose cautiously, approached on tiptoe the door, which was ajar, and there stood for some time a delighted spectator of the youthful revelry.

Washington in fact, though habitually grave and thoughtful, was of a social disposition, and loved cheerful society. He was fond of the dance, and it was the boast of many ancient dames in our day, who had been belles in the time of the Revolution, that they had danced minuets with him, or had him for a partner in contra-dances. There were balls in camp, in some of the dark times of the Revolution. "We had a little dance at my quarters," writes General Greene from Middlebrook, in March, 1779. "His Excellency and Mrs. Greene danced upwards of three hours without once

sitting down. Upon the whole, we had a pretty little frisk." *

A letter of Colonel Tench Tilghman, one of Washington's aides-de-camp, gives an instance of the general's festive gayety, when in the above year the army was cantoned near Morristown. A large company, of which the general and Mrs. Washington, General and Mrs. Greene, and Mr. and Mrs. Olney were part, dined with Colonel and Mrs. Biddle. Some little time after the ladies had retired from the table, Mr. Olney followed them into the next room. A clamor was raised against him as a deserter, and it was resolved that a party should be sent to demand him, and that if the ladies refused to give him up, he should be brought by force. Washington humored the joke, and offered to head the party. He led it with great formality to the door of the drawing-room, and sent in a summons. The ladies refused to give up the deserter. An attempt was made to capture him. The ladies came to the rescue. There was a mêlée; in the course of which his Excellency seems to have had a passage at arms with Mrs. Olney. The ladies were victorious, as they always ought to be, says the gallant Tilghman. †

* Greene to Col. Wadsworth. MS.

† This sportive occurrence gave rise to a piece of

More than one instance is told of Washington's being surprised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war. We have recorded one produced by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback, with a female prisoner *en croupe*. The following is another which occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadocio of the army, vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. Washington gave his consent, and with some of his officers attended to see the horse receive his first lesson. After much preparation, the pretender to equitation mounted into the saddle and was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his forefeet, threw up his heels, and gave the unlucky Gambado a

camp scandal. It was reported at a distance that Mrs. Olney had been in a violent rage, and had told Washington that, "if he did not let go her hand she would tear his eyes out, and that though he was a general, he was but a man."

Mr. Olney wrote to Colonel Tilghman, begging him to refute the scandal. The latter gave a true statement of the affair, declaring that the whole was done in jest, and that in the mock contest Mrs. Olney had made use of no expressions unbecoming a lady of her good breeding, or such as were taken the least amiss by the general.

somerset over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter, that, we are told, the tears ran down his cheeks. *

Still another instance is given, which occurred at the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, and was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter. In that fit of laughter, it was sagely presumed that he threw off the burden of care which had been weighing down his spirits throughout the war. He certainly relaxed much of his thoughtful gravity of demeanor when he had no longer the anxieties of a general command to harass him. The late Judge Brooke, who had served as an officer in the legion of Light-Horse Harry, used to tell of having frequently met Washington on his visits to Fredericksburg after the Revolutionary War, and how "hilarious" the general was on those occasions with "Jack Willis, and other friends of his young days," laughing heartily at the comic songs which were sung at table.

Colonel Henry Lee, too, who used to be a favored guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem

* Notes of the Rev. Mr. Tuttle. MS.

to have been much under the influence of that "reverential awe" which Washington is said to have inspired, if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair, general," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for anything; and I must have full price for my horses."

The bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh.* The general took this

*Another instance is on record of one of Washington's fits of laughter, which occurred in subsequent years. Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the general, were on their way on horseback to visit Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. As they passed through a wood on the skirts of the Mount Vernon grounds, they were tempted to make a hasty toilet beneath its shade; being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dismounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau. As he opened it, out flew cakes of windsor soap and fancy articles of all kinds. The man by mistake had changed their portmanteau

familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part. "Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow," said he; "see, that bird is laughing at you." *

Hearty laughter, however, was rare with Washington. The sudden explosions we hear of were the result of some sudden and ludicrous surprise. His general habit was a calm seriousness, easily softening into a benevolent smile.

In some few of his familiar letters, yet preserved, and not relating to business, there is occasionally a vein of pleasantry and even of humor; but almost invariably, they treat of matters of too grave import to admit of anything of the kind. It is to be deeply regretted that most of his family letters have been purposely destroyed.

The passion for hunting had revived with Washington on returning to his old hunting

at the last stopping place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedlar. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter.—See *Life of Judge J. Smith.*

* Communicated to us in a letter from a son of Colonel Lee.

grounds; but he had no hounds. His kennel had been broken up when he went to the wars, and the dogs given away, and it was not easy to replace them. After a time he received several hounds from France, sent out by Lafayette and other of the French officers, and once more sallied forth to renew his ancient sport. The French hounds, however, proved indifferent; he was out with them repeatedly, putting other hounds with them borrowed from gentlemen of the neighborhood. They improved after a while, but were never stanch, and caused him frequent disappointments. Probably he was not as stanch himself as formerly; an interval of several years may have blunted his keenness, if we may judge from the following entry in his diary:

"Out after breakfast with my hounds, found a fox and ran him sometimes hard, and sometimes at cold hunting from 11 till near 2—when I came home and left the huntsmen with them, who followed in the same manner two hours or more, and then took the dogs off without killing."

He appears at one time to have had an idea of stocking part of his estate with deer. In a letter to his friend, George William Fairfax in England, a letter expressive of kind recollections of former companionship, he says: "Though envy is no part of my composition,

yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living, is enough to create a strong desire in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may. I am not a little obliged to you for contributing to this, by procuring me a buck and doe of the best English deer; but if you have not already been at this trouble, I would, my good sir, now wish to relieve you from it, as Mr. Ogle of Maryland has been so obliging as to present me six fawns from his park of English deer at Bellair. With these, and tolerable care, I shall soon have a full stock for my small paddock." *

While Washington was thus calmly enjoying himself, came a letter from Henry Lee, who was now in Congress, conveying a mournful piece of intelligence: "Your friend and second, the patriot and noble Greene, is no more. Universal grief reigns here." Greene

* George William Fairfax resided in Bath, where he died on the 3d of April, 1787, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though his income was greatly reduced by the confiscation of his property in Virginia, he contributed generously during the Revolutionary War to the relief of American prisoners.—Sparks's *Washington's Writings*, vol. ii., p. 53.

died on the 18th of June, at his estate of Mulberry Grove, on Savannah River, presented to him by the State of Georgia. His last illness was brief; caused by a stroke of the sun; he was but forty-four years of age.

The news of his death struck heavily on Washington's heart, to whom, in the most arduous trials of the Revolution, he had been a second self. He had taken Washington as his model, and possessed naturally many of his great qualities. Like him, he was sound in judgment; persevering in the midst of discouragements; calm and self-possessed in time of danger; heedful of the safety of others; heedless of his own. Like him, he was modest and unpretending, and like him he had a perfect command of temper.

He had Washington's habits of early rising, and close and methodical despatch of business, "never suffering the day to crowd upon the morrow." In private intercourse he was frank, noble, candid, and intelligent; in the hurry of business he was free from petulance, and had, we are told, "a winning blandness of manner that won the affections of his officers."

His campaigns in the Carolinas showed him to be a worthy disciple of Washington, keeping the war alive by his own persevering hope and inexhaustible energy, and, as it were,

fighting almost without weapons. His great contest of generalship with the veteran Cornwallis, has insured for him a lasting renown.

"He was a great and good man!" was Washington's comprehensive eulogy on him; and in a letter to Lafayette he writes: "Greene's death is an event which has given such general concern, and is so much regretted by his numerous friends, that I can scarce persuade myself to touch upon it, even so far as to say that in him you lost a man who affectionately regarded, and was a sincere admirer of you." *

Other deaths pressed upon Washington's sensibility about the same time. That of General McDougall, who had served his country faithfully through the war, and since with equal fidelity in Congress. That, too, of Colonel Tench Tilghman, for a long time one of Washington's aides-de-camp, and "who left," writes he, "as fair a reputation as ever belonged to a human character. "Thus," adds he, "some of the pillars of the Revolution fall. Others are mouldering by insensible degrees.

* We are happy to learn that a complete collection of the correspondence of General Greene is about to be published by his worthy and highly cultivated grandson, George Washington Greene. It is a work that, like Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, should form a part of every American library.

May our country never want props to support the glorious fabric!"

In his correspondence about this time with several of the French noblemen who had been his associates in arms, his letters breathe the spirit of peace which was natural to him; for war with him had only been a matter of patriotism and public duty.

To the Marquis de la Rouerie, who had so bravely but modestly fought under the title of Colonel Armand, he writes: "I never expect to draw my sword again. I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it. My time is now occupied by rural amusements, in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is (although it is against the profession of arms, and would clip the wings of some of our young soldiers who are soaring after glory) to see the whole world in peace, and the inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind."

So, also, in a letter to Count Rochambeau, dated July 31st, 1786: "It must give pleasure," writes he, "to the friends of humanity, even in this distant section of the globe, to find that the clouds which threatened to burst in a storm of war on Europe, have dissipated, and left a still brighter horizon. . . . As the rage

of conquest, which in times of barbarity stimulated nations to blood, has in a great measure ceased; as the objects which formerly gave birth to wars are daily diminishing; and as mankind are becoming more enlightened and humanized, I cannot but flatter myself with the pleasing prospect, that a more liberal policy and more pacific systems will take place amongst them. To indulge this idea affords a soothing consolation to a philanthropic mind; insomuch that, although it should be found an illusion, one would hardly wish to be divested of an error so grateful in itself and so innocent in its consequences."

And in another letter, "It is thus, you see, my dear Count, in retirement upon my farm I speculate upon the fate of nations, amusing myself with innocent reveries that mankind will one day grow happier and better."

How easily may the wisest of men be deceived in their speculations as to the future, especially when founded on the idea of the perfectibility of human nature. These halcyon dreams of universal peace were indulged on the very eve, as it were, of the French Revolution, which was to deluge the world in blood, and when the rage for conquest was to have unbounded scope under the belligerent sway of Napoleon.

Chapter V.

Washington Doubts the Solidity of the Confederation —Correspondence with John Jay on the Subject— Plan of a Convention of all the States to Revise the Federal System—Washington Heads the Virginia Delegation — Insurrection in Massachusetts — The Convention—A Federal Constitution Organized— Ratified.

FROM his quiet retreat at Mount Vernon, Washington, though ostensibly withdrawn from public affairs, was watching with intense solicitude the working together of the several parts in the great political confederacy ; anxious to know whether the thirteen distinct States, under the present organization, could form a sufficiently efficient general government. He was daily becoming more and more doubtful of the solidity of the fabric he had assisted to raise. The form of confederation which had bound the States together and met the public exigencies during

the Revolution, when there was a pressure of external danger, was daily proving more and more incompetent to the purposes of a national government. Congress had devised a system of credit to provide for the national expenditure and the extinction of the national debts, which amounted to something more than forty millions of dollars. The system experienced neglect from some States and opposition from others; each consulting its local interests and prejudices, instead of the interests and obligations of the whole. In like manner treaty stipulations, which bound the good faith of the whole, were slighted, if not violated by individual States, apparently unconscious that they must each share in the discredit thus brought upon the national name.

In a letter to James Warren, who had formerly been president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, Washington writes: "The confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance, and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to. To me it is a solecism in politics; indeed it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation (who are creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and

short duration, and who are amenable for every action, and may be recalled at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing) sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness." *

Not long previous to the writing of this letter, Washington had been visited at Mount Vernon by commissioners, who had been appointed by the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland to form a compact relative to the navigation of the rivers Potomac and Pocomoke, and of part of the Chesapeake Bay, and who had met at Alexandria for the purpose. During their visit at Mount Vernon, the policy of maintaining a naval force on the Chesapeake, and of establishing a tariff of duties on imports to which the laws of both States should conform, was discussed, and it was agreed that the commissioners should propose to the governments of their respective States the appointment of other commissioners, with powers to

* Sparks, ix., 139.

make conjoint arrangements for the above purposes; to which the assent of Congress was to be solicited.

The idea of conjoint arrangements between States, thus suggested in the quiet councils of Mount Vernon, was a step in the right direction, and will be found to lead to important results.

From a letter, written two or three months subsequently, we gather some of the ideas on national policy which were occupying Washington's mind. "I have ever been a friend to adequate powers in Congress, without which it is evident to me, we never shall establish a national character, or be considered as on a respectable footing by the powers of Europe.—We are either a united people under one head and for federal purposes, or we are thirteen independent sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other.—If the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority.—I can foresee no evil greater than disunion; than those *unreasonable* jealousies (I say unreasonable because I would have a *proper* jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the

constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils for the prevention of real ones." *

An earnest correspondence took place some months subsequently between Washington and the illustrious patriot, John Jay, at that time Secretary of Foreign Affairs, wherein the signs of the times were feelingly discussed.

"Our affairs," writes Jay, "seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them. . . . What I most fear is, that the better kind of people, by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances, will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of public faith and rectitude, to consider

* See Letter to James McHenry. Sparks, ix., 121.

the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm." Washington, in reply, coincided in opinion that public affairs were drawing rapidly to a crisis, and he acknowledged the event to be equally beyond his foresight. "We have errors," said he, "to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging, somewhere, a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments must they not mingle frequently with the mass of the citizens? Is it not rather to

be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

"What then is to be done? things cannot go on in the same strain forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. . . . I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! What a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

"Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

"Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight in the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy, in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present."

His anxiety on this subject was quickened by accounts of discontents and commotions in the Eastern States produced by the pressure of the times, the public and private indebtedness, and the imposition of heavy taxes at a moment of financial embarrassment.

General Knox, now Secretary at War, who had been sent by Congress to Massachusetts to inquire into these troubles, thus writes about the insurgents: "Their creed is, that the property of the United States has been protected from the confiscation of Britain by the joint exertions of *all*, and therefore ought to be *the common property of all*, and he that attempts opposition to this creed is an enemy to equity and justice, and ought to be swept

from off the face of the earth." Again, "They are determined to annihilate all debts, public and private, and have agrarian laws, which are easily effected by the means of unfunded paper, which shall be a tender in all cases whatever."

In reply to Colonel Henry Lee in Congress, who had addressed several letters to him on the subject, Washington writes: "You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, or, if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for the disorders. *Influence* is not *government*. Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties, and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once. There is a call for decision. Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them, if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it at the moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, *all* will be convinced that the superstructure is bad and wants support. To delay one or other of these expedients, is to exasperate on the one hand, or to give confidence on the other. . . . Let the reins of government, then, be braced and held with

a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended; but not suffered to be trampled upon whilst it has an existence."

A letter to him from his former aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, dated New Haven, November 1st, says: "The troubles in Massachusetts still continue. Government is prostrated in the dust, and it is much to be feared that there is not energy enough in that State to re-establish the civil powers. The leaders of the mob, whose fortunes and measures are desperate, are strengthening themselves daily; and it is expected that they will soon take possession of the continental magazine at Springfield, in which there are from ten to fifteen thousand stand of arms in excellent order.

"A general want of compliance with the requisitions of Congress for money seems to prognosticate that we are rapidly advancing to a crisis. Congress, I am told, are seriously alarmed, and hardly know which way to turn or what to expect. Indeed, my dear General, nothing but a good Providence can extricate us from the present convulsion.

"In case of civil discord, I have already told you it was seriously my opinion that you could not remain neuter, and that you would

be obliged, in self-defense, to take one part or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion."

Close upon the receipt of this letter, came intelligence that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress which had been offered by their General Court, were still acting in open violation of law and government; and that the chief magistrate had been obliged to call upon the militia of the State to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God! is man," writes Washington, "that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It was but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live; constitutions of our own choice and making; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream."

His letters to Knox show the trouble of his mind. "I feel, my dear General Knox, infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who, besides a tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them? I do assure you that, even at this moment, when I

reflect upon the present prospect of our affairs, it seems to me to be like the vision of a dream. . . . After what I have seen, or rather what I have heard, I shall be surprised at nothing; for, if three years since, any person had told me that there would have been such a formidable rebellion as exists at this day against the laws and constitution of our own making, I should have thought him a bedlamite, a fit subject for a mad-house. . . . In regretting, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend, General Greene, I have accompanied it of late with a query, whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which, it is more than probable, many of his compatriots may live to bemoan."

To James Madison, also, he writes in the same strain. "How melancholy is the reflection, that in so short a time we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the predictions of our transatlantic foes. 'Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance and the fine arts of self-interested and designing, disaffected, and desperate characters, to involve this great country in wretchedness and contempt? What

stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our government than these disorders? If there is not power in it to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty, or property? To you, I am sure I need not add aught on the subject. The consequences of a lax or inefficient government are too obvious to be dwelt upon. Thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas, a liberal and energetic constitution, well checked and well watched, to prevent encroachments, might restore us to that degree of respectability and consequence to which we had the fairest prospect of attaining."

Thus Washington, even though in retirement, was almost unconsciously exercising a powerful influence on national affairs; no longer the soldier, he was now becoming the statesman. The opinions and counsels given in his letters were widely effective. The leading expedient for federate organization, mooted in his conferences with the commissioners of Maryland and Virginia, during their visit to Mount Vernon in the previous year, had been extended and ripened in legislative assemblies, and ended in a plan of a convention composed of delegates from all the States, to meet in Philadelphia for the sole and express purpose

of revising the federal system, and correcting its defect; the proceedings of the convention to be subsequently reported to Congress, and the several legislatures, for approval and confirmation.

Washington was unanimously put at the head of the Virginia delegation; but for some time objected to accept the nomination. He feared to be charged with inconsistency in again appearing in a public situation, after his declared resolution to the contrary. "It will have, also," said he, "a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease are so much desired by me, and so essentially necessary."* Beside, he had just avowed his intention of resigning the presidency of the Cincinnati Society, which was to hold its triennial meeting in May, in Philadelphia, and he could not appear at the same time and place on any other occasion, without giving offense to his worthy companions in arms, the late officers in the American army.

These considerations were strenuously combated, for the weight and influence of his name and counsel were felt to be all-important in giving dignity to the delegation. Two

* Letter to Edmund Randolph, governor of Virginia.

things contributed to bring him to a favorable decision: First, an insinuation that the opponents of the convention were monarchists, who wished the distractions of the country should continue, until a monarchical government might be resorted to as an ark of safety. The other was the insurrection in Massachusetts.

Having made up his mind to serve as a delegate to the convention, he went into a course of preparatory reading on the history and principles of ancient and modern confederacies. An abstract of the general principles of each, with notes of their vices or defects, exists in his own handwriting, among his papers; though it is doubted by a judicious commentator * whether it was originally drawn up by him, as several works are cited, which are written in languages that he did not understand.

Before the time arrived for the meeting of the convention, which was the second Monday in May, his mind was relieved from one source of poignant solicitude, by learning that the insurrection in Massachusetts had been suppressed with but little bloodshed, and that the principals had fled to Canada. He doubted, however, the policy of the legislature of that

* Mr. Sparks. For this interesting document see *Writings of Washington*, vol. ix., Appendix, No. iv.

State in disfranchising a large number of its citizens for their rebellious conduct; thinking more lenient measures might have produced as good an effect, without entirely alienating the affections of the people from the government; beside depriving some of them of the means of gaining a livelihood.

On the 9th of May, Washington set out in his carriage from Mount Vernon to attend the convention. At Chester, where he arrived on the 13th, he was met by General Mifflin, now speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, Generals Knox and Varnum, Colonel Humphreys, and other personages of note. At Gray's Ferry the city light horse were in attendance, by whom he was escorted into Philadelphia.

It was not until the 25th of May that a sufficient number of delegates were assembled to form a quorum; when they proceeded to organize the body, and by a unanimous vote Washington was called up to the chair as president.

The following anecdote is recorded by Mr. Leigh Pierce, who was a delegate from Georgia. When the convention first opened, there were a number of propositions brought forward as great leading principles of the new government to be established. A copy of them was given to each member with an injunction of profound secrecy. One morning a member, by accident,

dropped his copy of the propositions. It was luckily picked up by General Mifflin, and handed to General Washington, who put it in his pocket. After the debates of the day were over, and the question for adjournment was called for, Washington rose, and previous to putting the question, addressed the committee as follows: "Gentlemen, I am sorry to find that some one member of this body has been so neglectful of the secrets of the convention, as to drop in the State House a copy of their proceedings; which, by accident, was picked up and delivered to me this morning. I must entreat gentlemen to be more careful, lest our transactions get into the newspapers, and disturb the public repose by premature speculations. I know not whose paper it is, but there it is (throwing it down on the table); let him who owns it take it." At the same time he bowed, took his hat, and left the room with a dignity so severe that every person seemed alarmed. "For my part, I was extremely so," adds Mr. Pierce, "for, putting my hand in my pocket, I missed my copy of the same paper; but advancing to the table, my fears soon dissipated. I found it to be in the handwriting of another person."

Mr. Pierce found his copy at his lodgings, in the pocket of a coat which he had changed

that morning. No person ever ventured to claim the anonymous paper.

We forbear to go into the voluminous proceedings of this memorable convention, which occupied from four to seven hours each day for four months; and in which every point was the subject of able and scrupulous discussion by the best talent and noblest spirits of the country. Washington felt restrained by his situation as president, from taking a part in the debates, but his well-known opinions influenced the whole. The result was the formation of the Constitution of the United States, which (with some amendments made in after years) still exists.

As the members on the last day of the session were signing the engrossed constitution, Dr. Franklin, looking towards the president's chair, at the back of which a sun was painted, observed to those persons next to him, "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that sun behind the president, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun." *

"The business being closed," says Wash-

* *The Madison Papers*, iii., 1624.

ington in his diary (Sept. 17th), "the members adjourned to the city tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other. After which I returned to my lodgings, did some business with and received the papers from, the secretary of the convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous work which had been executed."

"It appears to me little short of a miracle," writes he to Lafayette, "that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manners, circumstances, and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I such an enthusiastic, partial, or undiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real, though not radical defects. With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole machine must move, my creed is simply, First, that the general government is not invested with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

"Secondly, that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will for ever arise from, and at short, stated intervals recur to, the free

suffrages of the people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals.

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America, be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration."

The constitution thus formed, was forwarded to Congress, and thence transmitted to the State legislatures, each of which submitted it to a State convention composed of delegates chosen for that express purpose by the people. The ratification of the instrument by nine States was necessary to carry it into effect;

and as the several State conventions would assemble at different times, nearly a year must elapse before the decisions of the requisite number could be obtained.

During this time, Washington resumed his retired life at Mount Vernon, seldom riding as he says, beyond the limits of his own farms, but kept informed by his numerous correspondents, such as James Madison, John Jay, and Generals Knox, Lincoln, and Armstrong, of the progress of the constitution through its various ordeals, and of the strenuous opposition which it met with in different quarters, both in debate and through the press. A diversity of opinions and inclinations on the subject had been expected by him. "The various passions and motives by which men are influenced," said he, "are concomitants of fallibility, and ingrafted into our nature. Still he never had a doubt that it would ultimately be adopted; and, in fact, the national decision in its favor was more fully and strongly pronounced than even he had anticipated.

His feelings on learning the result were expressed with that solemn and religious faith in the protection of Heaven, manifested by him in all the trials and vicissitudes through which his country had passed. "We may," said he, "with a kind of pious and grateful exulta-

tion, trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events, which first induced the States to appoint a general convention, and then led them, one after another, by such steps as were best calculated to effect the object, into an adoption of the system recommended by the General Convention; thereby, in all human probability, laying a lasting foundation for tranquillity and happiness, when we had but too much reason to fear that confusion and misery were coming rapidly upon us." *

The testimonials of ratification having been received by Congress from a sufficient number of States, an act was passed by that body on the 13th of September, appointing the first Wednesday in January, 1789, for the people of the United States to choose electors of a president according to the constitution, and the first Wednesday in the month of February following for the electors to meet and make a choice. The meeting of the government was to be on the first Wednesday in March, and in the city of New York.

* Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, 20th July, 1788.

Chapter VI.

Washington Talked of for the Presidency—His Letters on the Subject Expressing his Reluctance—His Election—His Progress to the Seat of Government —His Reception at New York—The Inauguration.

THE adoption of the Federal Constitution was another epoch in the life of Washington. Before the official forms of an election could be carried into operation, a unanimous sentiment throughout the Union pronounced him the nation's choice to fill the presidential chair. He looked forward to the possibility of his election with characteristic modesty and unfeigned reluctance; as his letters to his confidential friends bear witness. "It has no fascinating allurements for me," writes he to Lafayette. "At my time of life and under my circumstances, the increasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest

man on my own farm. Let those follow the pursuits of ambition and fame who have a keener relish for them, or who may have more years in store for the enjoyment."

Colonel Henry Lee had written to him warmly and eloquently on the subject. "My anxiety is extreme that the new government may have an auspicious beginning. To effect this and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is certain that again you will be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then to be sure you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, gave to the lot of one man. It is my belief, it is my anxious hope, that this will be the case."

"The event to which you allude may never happen," replies Washington. "This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definite and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is

to continue in the enjoyment of it solely until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed as to believe me uninfluenced by sinister motives, in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed to myself indispensable.

"Should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends; might I not, after the declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart), in the judgment of the impartial world and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require, that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue.

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country and myself, I should despise all the

party clamor and unjust censure, which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

"If I declined the task, it would lie upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, nor the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief, that some other person, who had less pretense and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself."

In a letter to Colonel Alexander Hamilton he writes: "In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been

able to place it, I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must, ere long, be called upon to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion, though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those who are less acquainted with me, that, if I should receive the appointment, and if I should be prevailed upon to accept it, the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the public weal, in hopes that, at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with, and that I might be permitted once more to retire, to pass an unclouded evening, after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestic tranquillity."

To Lafayette he declares that his difficulties increase and multiply as he draws toward the period when, according to common belief, it will be necessary for him to give a definite answer as to the office in question.

"Should circumstances render it in a manner inevitably necessary to be in the affirmative," writes he, "I shall assume the task with the most unfeigned reluctance, and with a real

diffidence, for which I shall probably receive no credit from the world. If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which if pursued will insure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path clear and direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry, and frugality, are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs, and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to co-operate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

The election took place at the appointed time, and it was soon ascertained that Washington was chosen President for the term of four years from the 4th of March. By this time the arguments and entreaties of his friends, and his own convictions of public expediency, had determined him to accept; and he made

preparations to depart for the seat of government, as soon as he should receive official notice of his election. Among other duties, he paid a visit to his mother at Fredericksburg; it was a painful, because likely to be a final one, for she was afflicted with a malady which, it was evident, must soon terminate her life. Their parting was affectionate, but solemn; she had always been reserved and moderate in expressing herself in regard to the successes of her son; but it must have been a serene satisfaction at the close of her life to see him elevated by his virtues to the highest honor of his country.

From a delay in forming a quorum of Congress, the votes of the electoral college were not counted until early in April, when they were found to be unanimous in favor of Washington. "The delay," said he, in a letter to General Knox, "may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (with the *world* it would obtain little credit), that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit, who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities,

and inclination, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage; but what returns will be made for them, Heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men; for of the consolations, which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

At length, on the 14th of April, he received a letter from the president of Congress, duly notifying him of his election; and he prepared to set out immediately for New York, the seat of government. An entry in his diary, dated the 16th, says: "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

At the first stage of his journey a trial of his tenderest feelings awaited him in a public dinner given him at Alexandria, by his neighbors and personal friends, among whom he had lived in the constant interchange of kind offices,

and who were so aware of the practical beneficence of his private character. A deep feeling of regret mingled with their festivity. The mayor, who presided, and spoke the sentiments of the people of Alexandria, deplored in his departure the loss of the first and best of their citizens, the ornament of the aged, the model of the young, the improver of their agriculture, the friend of their commerce, the protector of their infant academy, the benefactor of their poor,—but "go," added he, "and make a grateful people happy, who will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this new sacrifice for their interests."

Washington was too deeply affected for many words in reply. "Just after having bade adieu to my domestic connections," said he, "this tender proof of your friendship is but too well calculated to awaken still further my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life. All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the care of that beneficent Being, who, on a former occasion, happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. But words fail me. Unutterable sensations must, then, be left to more expressive silence, while from an aching heart

I bid all my affectionate friends and kind neighbors farewell!"

His progress to the seat of government was a continual ovation. The ringing of bells and roaring of cannonry proclaimed his course through the country. The old and young, women and children, thronged the highways to bless and welcome him. Deputations of the most respectable inhabitants from the principal places came forth to meet and escort him. At Baltimore, on his arrival and departure, his carriage was attended by a numerous cavalcade of citizens, and he was saluted by the thunder of artillery.

At the frontier of Pennsylvania he was met by his former companion in arms, Mifflin, now governor of the State, who with Judge Peters and a civil and military escort, was waiting to receive him. Washington had hoped to be spared all military parade, but found it was not to be evaded. At Chester, where he stopped to breakfast, there were preparations for a public entrance into Philadelphia. Cavalry had assembled from the surrounding country; a superb white horse was led out for Washington to mount, and a grand procession set forward, with General St. Clair of Revolutionary notoriety at its head. It gathered numbers as it advanced; passed under triumphal arches

entwined with laurel, and entered Philadelphia amid the shouts of the multitude.

A day of public festivity succeeded, ended by a display of fireworks. Washington's reply to the congratulations of the mayor at a great civic banquet, spoke the genuine feelings of his modest nature, amid these testimonials of a world's applause. "When I contemplate the interposition of Providence, as it was visibly manifested in guiding us through the Revolution, in preparing us for the reception of the general government, and in conciliating the good-will of the people of American toward one another after its adoption, I feel myself oppressed and almost overwhelmed with a sense of divine munificence. I feel that nothing is due to my personal agency in all those wonderful and complicated events, except what can be attributed to an earnest zeal for the good of my country."

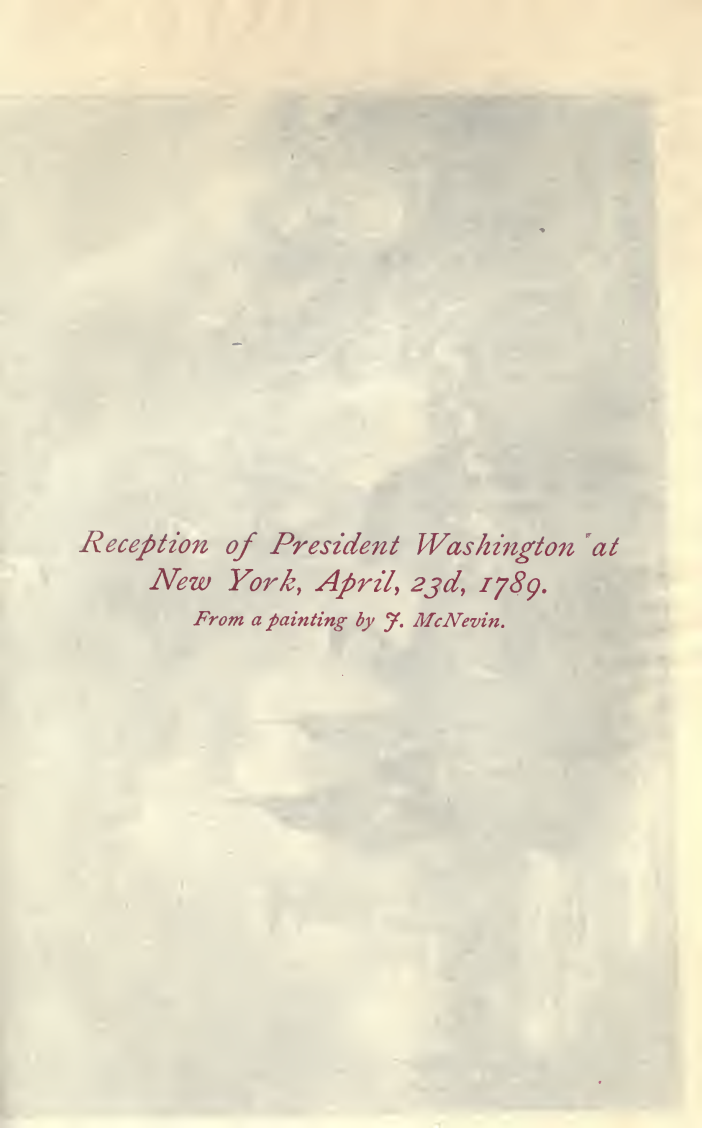
We question whether any of these testimonials of a nation's gratitude affected Washington more sensibly than those he received at Trenton. It was on a sunny afternoon when he arrived on the banks of the Delaware, where, twelve years before he had crossed in darkness and storm, through clouds of snow and drifts of floating ice, on his daring attempt to strike a blow at a triumphant enemy.

Here at present all was peace and sunshine, the broad river flowed placidly along, and crowds awaited him on the opposite bank, to hail him with love and transport.

We will not dwell on the joyous ceremonials with which he was welcomed, but there was one too peculiar to be omitted. The reader may remember Washington's gloomy night on the banks of the Assunpink, which flows through Trenton; the camp fires of Cornwallis in front of him; the Delaware full of floating ice in the rear; and his sudden resolve on that midnight retreat which turned the fortunes of the campaign. On the bridge crossing that eventful stream, the ladies of Trenton had caused a triumphal arch to be erected. It was entwined with evergreens and laurels, and bore the inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters." At this bridge the matrons of the city were assembled to pay him reverence; and as he passed under the arch, a number of young girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, strewed flowers before him, singing an ode expressive of their love and gratitude. Never was ovation more graceful, touching, and sincere; and Washington, tenderly affected, declared that the impression of it on his heart could never be effaced.

His whole progress through New Jersey must have afforded a similar contrast to his weary marchings to and fro, harassed by doubts and perplexities, with bale fires blazing on its hills, instead of festive illuminations, and when the ringing of bells and booming of cannon, now so joyous, were the signals of invasion and maraud.

In respect to his reception at New York, Washington had signified in a letter to Governor Clinton, that none could be so congenial to his feelings as a quiet entry devoid of ceremony; but his modest wishes were not complied with. At Elizabeth Point, a committee of both Houses of Congress, with various civic functionaries, waited by appointment to receive him. He embarked on board of a splendid barge, constructed for the occasion. It was manned by thirteen branch pilots, masters of vessels, in white uniforms, and commanded by Commodore Nicholson. Other barges, fancifully decorated, followed, having on board the heads of departments and other public officers, and several distinguished citizens. As they passed through the strait between the Jerseys and Staten Island, called the Kills, other boats decorated with flags fell in their wake, until the whole, forming a nautical procession, swept up the broad and beautiful bay of New York,



Reception of President Washington at New York, April, 23d, 1789.

From a painting by J. McNevin.

to the sound of instrumental music. On board of two vessels were parties of ladies and gentlemen who sang congratulatory odes as Washington's barge approached. The ships at anchor in the harbor, dressed in colors, fired salutes as it passed. One alone, the *Galveston*, a Spanish man-of-war, displayed no signs of gratulation, until the barge of the general was nearly abreast, when suddenly, as if by magic, the yards were manned, the ship burst forth, as it were, into a full array of flags and signals, and thundered a salute of thirteen guns.

He approached the landing place of Murray's Wharf, amid the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannonry, and the shouting of multitudes collected on every pier-head. On landing, he was received by Governor Clinton. General Knox, too, who had taken such affectionate leave of him on his retirement from military life, was there to welcome him in his civil capacity. Other of his fellow-soldiers of the Revolution were likewise there mingled with the civic dignitaries. At this juncture, an officer stepped up and requested Washington's orders, announcing himself as commanding his guard. Washington desired him to proceed according to the directions he might have received in the present arrangements, but that

for the future the affection of his fellow-citizens was all the guard he wanted.

Carpets had been spread to a carriage prepared to convey him to his destined residence, but he preferred to walk. He was attended by a long civil and military train. In the streets through which he passed, the houses were decorated with flags, silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens, and bore his name in every form of ornament. The streets were crowded with people, so that it was with difficulty a passage could be made by the city officers. Washington frequently bowed to the multitude as he passed, taking off his hat to the ladies, who thronged every window, waving their handkerchiefs, throwing flowers before him, and many of them shedding tears of enthusiasm.

That day he dined with his old friend Governor Clinton, who had invited a numerous company of public functionaries and foreign diplomatists to meet him, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

Would the reader know the effect upon Washington's mind of this triumphant entry into New York? It was to depress rather than to excite him. Modestly diffident of his abilities to cope with the new duties on which he was entering, he was overwhelmed by what

he regarded as proofs of public expectation. Noting in his diary the events of the day, he writes: "The display of boats which attended and joined us on this occasion, some with vocal and some with instrumental music on board; the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the skies, as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (considering the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my labors to do good) as they are pleasing."

The inauguration was delayed for several days, in which a question arose as to the form or title by which the President elect was to be addressed; and a committee in both Houses was appointed to report upon the subject. The question was stated without Washington's privity, and contrary to his desire; as he feared that any title might awaken the sensitive jealousy of republicans, at a moment when it was all-important to conciliate public goodwill to the new form of government. It was a relief to him, therefore, when it was finally resolved that the address should be simply "the President of the United States," without any addition of title; a judicious form, which has remained to the present day.

The inauguration took place on the 30th of

April. At nine o'clock in the morning, there were religious services in all the churches, and prayers put up for the blessing of Heaven on the new government. At twelve o'clock the city troops paraded before Washington's door, and soon after the committees of Congress and heads of departments came in their carriages. At half-past twelve the procession moved forward, preceded by the troops; next came the committees and heads of departments in their carriages; then Washington in a coach of state, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Humphreys, and his secretary, Mr. Lear, in his own carriage. The foreign ministers and a long train of citizens brought up the rear.

About two hundred yards before reaching the hall, Washington and his suite alighted from their carriages, and passed through the troops, who were drawn up on each side, into the hall and senate chamber, where the Vice-President, the Senate and House of Representatives were assembled. The Vice-President, John Adams, recently inaugurated, advanced and conducted Washington to a chair of state at the upper end of the room. A solemn silence prevailed; when the Vice-President rose, and informed him that all things were prepared for him to take the oath of office required by the Constitution.

The oath was to be administered by the

Chancellor of the State of New York, in a balcony in front of the senate chamber, and in full view of an immense multitude occupying the street, the windows, and even roofs of the adjacent houses. The balcony formed a kind of open recess, with lofty columns supporting the roof. In the centre was a table with a covering of crimson velvet, upon which lay a superbly bound Bible on a crimson velvet cushion. This was all the paraphernalia for the august scene.

All eyes were fixed upon the balcony, when, at the appointed hour, Washington made his appearance, accompanied by various public functionaries, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives. He was clad in a full suit of dark brown cloth, of American manufacture, with a steel-hilted dress sword, white silk stockings, and silver shoe buckles. His hair was dressed and powdered in the fashion of the day, and worn in a bag and solitaire.

His entrance on the balcony was hailed by universal shouts. He was evidently moved by this demonstration of public affection. Advancing to the front of the balcony, he laid his hand upon his heart, bowed several times, and then retreated to an armchair near the table.

The populace appeared to understand that

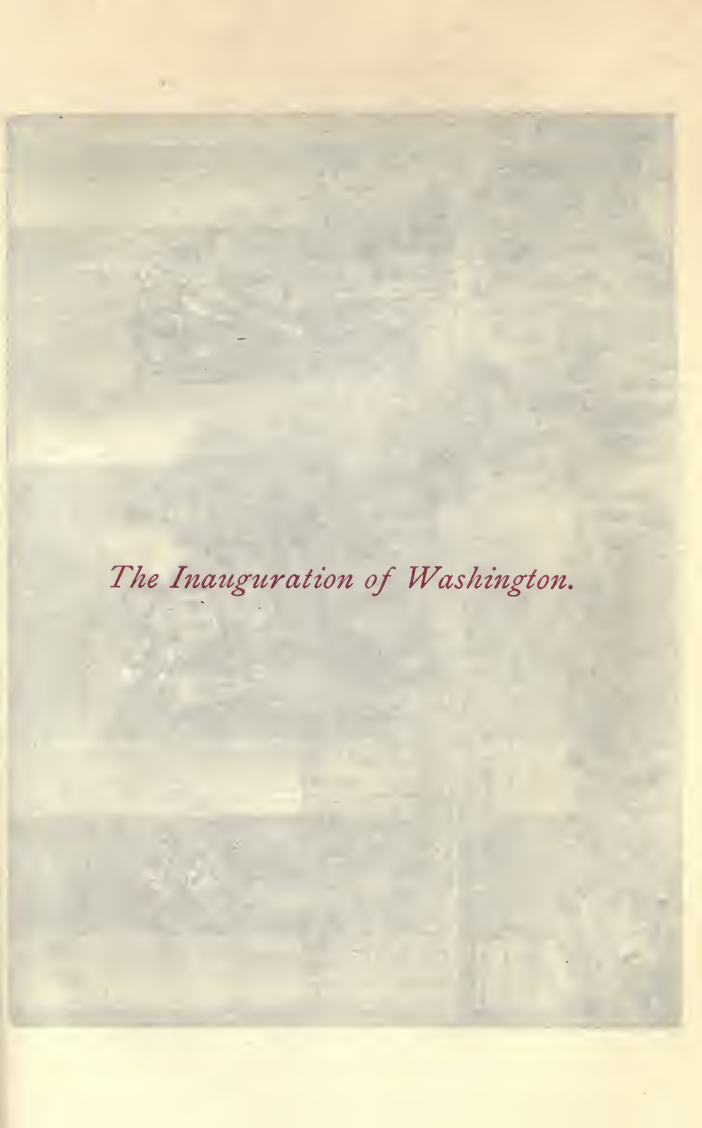
the scene had overcome him ; and were hushed at once into profound silence.

After a few moments Washington rose and again came forward. John Adams, the Vice-President, stood on his right; on his left the chancellor of the State, Robert R. Livingston ; somewhat in the rear were Roger Sherman, Alexander Hamilton, Generals Knox, and St. Clair, the Baron Steuben, and others.

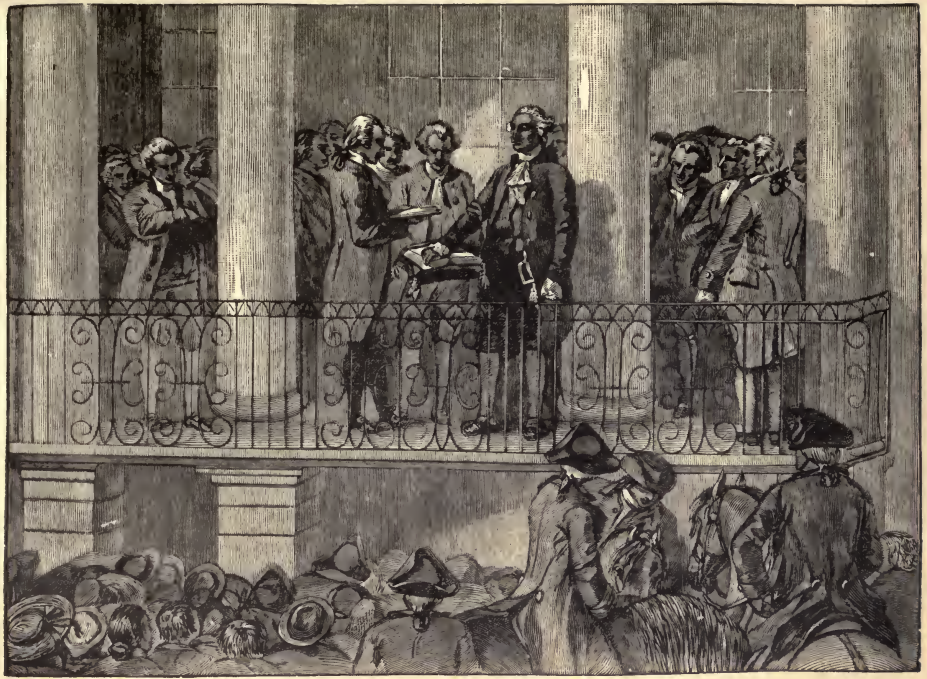
The chancellor advanced to administer the oath prescribed by the Constitution, and Mr. Otis, the secretary of the Senate, held up the Bible on its crimson cushion. The oath was read slowly and distinctly ; Washington at the same time laying his hand on the open Bible. When it was concluded, he replied solemnly, "I swear—so help me God!" Mr. Otis would have raised the Bible to his lips, but he bowed down reverently and kissed it.

The chancellor now stepped forward, waved his hand and exclaimed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" At this moment a flag was displayed on the cupola of the hall, on which signal there was a general discharge of artillery on the Battery. All the bells of the city rang out a joyful peal, and the multitude rent the air with acclamations.

Washington again bowed to the people and



The Inauguration of Washington.



returned into the senate chamber, where he delivered to both houses of Congress, his inaugural address, characterized by his usual modesty, moderation, and good sense, but uttered with a voice deep, slightly tremulous, and so low as to demand close attention in the listeners. After this he proceeded with the whole assemblage on foot to St. Paul's church, where prayers suited to the occasion were read by Dr. Prevost, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York, who had been appointed by the Senate one of the chaplains of Congress. So closed the ceremonies of the inauguration.

The whole day was one of sincere rejoicing, and in the evening there were brilliant illuminations and fireworks.

We have been accustomed to look to Washington's private letters for the sentiments of his heart. Those written to several of his friends immediately after his inauguration, show how little he was excited by his official elevation. "I greatly fear," writes he, "that my countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant, and I might almost say undue praises, which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant, though I will fondly hope, unmerited censures."

Little was his modest spirit aware that the praises so dubiously received were but the opening notes of a theme that was to increase from age to age, to pervade all lands and endure throughout all generations.

In the chapters here concluded, we have endeavored to narrate faithfully the career of Washington from childhood, through his early surveying expeditions in the wilderness, his diplomatic mission to the French posts on the frontier, his campaigns in the French war, his arduous trials as commander-in-chief throughout the Revolution, the noble simplicity of his life in retirement, until we have shown him elevated to the presidential chair, by no effort of his own, in a manner against his wishes, by the unanimous vote of a grateful country.

The plan of our work has necessarily carried us widely into the campaigns of the Revolution, even where Washington was not present in person; for his spirit pervaded and directed the whole, and a general knowledge of the whole is necessary to appreciate the sagacity, forecast, enduring fortitude, and comprehensive wisdom with which he conducted it. He himself has signified to one who aspired to write

his biography, that any memoirs of his life, distinct and unconnected with the history of the war, would be unsatisfactory. In treating of the Revolution, we have endeavored to do justice to what we consider its most striking characteristic; the greatness of the object and the scantiness of the means. We have endeavored to keep in view the prevailing poverty of resources, the scandalous neglects, the squalid miseries of all kinds, with which its champions had to contend in their expeditions through trackless wildernesses, or thinly peopled regions; beneath scorching suns or inclement skies; their wintery marches to be traced by bloody footprints on snow and ice; their desolate wintery encampments, rendered still more desolate by nakedness and famine. It was in the patience and fortitude with which these ills were sustained by a half-disciplined yeomanry, voluntary exiles from their homes, destitute of all the "pomp and circumstance" of war to excite them, and animated solely by their patriotism, that we read the noblest and most affecting characteristics of that great struggle for human rights. They do wrong to its moral grandeur, who seek by commonplace exaggeration, to give a melodramatic effect and false glare to its military operations, and to place its greatest triumphs in the conflicts of

the field. Lafayette showed a true sense of the nature of the struggle, when Napoleon, accustomed to effect ambitious purposes by hundreds of thousands of troops, and tens of thousands of slain, sneered at the scanty armies, of the American Revolution and its "boasted allies." "Sire," was the admirable and comprehensive reply, "it was the grandest of causes won by skirmishes of sentinels and outposts."

In regard to the character and conduct of Washington, we have endeavored to place his deeds in the clearest light, and left them to speak for themselves, generally avoiding comment or eulogium. We have quoted his own words and writings largely, to explain his feelings and motives, and give the true key to his policy; for never did man leave a more truthful mirror of his heart and mind, and a more thorough exponent of his conduct, than he has left in his copious correspondence. There his character is to be found in all its majestic simplicity, its massive grandeur, and quiet colossal strength. He was no hero of romance; there was nothing of romantic heroism in his nature. As a warrior, he was incapable of fear, but made no merit of defying danger. He fought for a cause, but not for personal renown. Gladly, when he had won the cause, he hung up his sword, never again to take it down.

Glory, that blatant word, which haunts some military minds like the bray of the trumpet, formed no part of his aspirations. To act justly was his instinct, to promote the public weal his constant effort, to deserve the "affections of good men" his ambition. With such qualifications for the pure exercise of sound judgment and comprehensive wisdom, he ascended the presidential chair.

There for the present we leave him. So far our work is complete, comprehending the whole military life of Washington, and his agency in public affairs, up to the formation of our Constitution. How well we have executed it, we leave to the public to determine; hoping to find it, as heretofore, far more easily satisfied with the result of our labors than we are ourselves. Should the measure of health and good spirits, with which a kind Providence has blessed us beyond the usual term of literary labor, be still continued, we may go on, and in another volume give the presidential career and closing life of Washington. In the meantime having found a resting-place in our task, we stay our hands, lay by our pen, and seek that relaxation and repose which gathering years require.

Sunnyside, 1857. W. I.

Chapter VIII.

The New Government—Domestic and Foreign Relations—Washington's Anxious Position—Its Difficulties—Without Cabinet or Constitutional Advisers—John Jay—Hamilton—His Efficient Support of the Constitution and Theoretic Doubts—James Madison—Knox—His Characteristics.

THE eyes of the world were upon Washington at the commencement of his administration. He had won laurels in the field; would they continue to flourish in the cabinet? His position was surrounded with difficulties. Inexperienced in the duties of civil administration, he was to inaugurate a new and untried system of government, composed of States and people, as yet a mere experiment, to which some looked forward with buoyant confidence,—many with doubt and apprehension.

He had moreover a high-spirited people to manage, in whom a jealous passion for freedom

and independence had been strengthened by war, and who might bear with impatience even the restraints of self-imposed government. The Constitution which he was to inaugurate had met with vehement opposition, when under discussion in the general and State governments. Only three States, New Jersey, Delware, and Georgia, had accepted it unanimously. Several of the most important States had adopted it by a mere majority; five of them under an expressed expectation of specified amendments or modifications; while two States, Rhode Island and North Carolina, still stood aloof.

It is true, the irritation produced by the conflict of opinions in the general and State conventions, had, in a great measure subsided; but circumstances might occur to inflame it anew. A diversity of opinions still existed concerning the new government. Some feared that it would have too little control over the individual States: that the political connection would prove too weak to preserve order and prevent civil strife; others, that it would be too strong for their separate independence, and would tend toward consolidation and despotism.

The very extent of the country he was called upon to govern, ten times larger than

that of any previous republic, must have pressed with weight upon Washington's mind. It presented to the Atlantic a front of fifteen hundred miles, divided into individual States, differing in the forms of their local governments, differing from each other in interests, in territorial magnitudes, in amount of population, in manners, soils, climates and productions, and the characteristics of their several peoples.

Beyond the Alleghanies extended regions almost boundless, as yet for the most part wild and uncultivated, the asylum of roving Indians and restless, discontented white men. Vast tracts, however, were rapidly being peopled, and would soon be portioned into sections requiring local government. The great natural outlet for the exportation of the products of this region of inexhaustible fertility, was the Mississippi; but Spain opposed a barrier to the free navigation of this river. Here was peculiar cause of solicitude. Before leaving Mount Vernon, Washington had heard that the hardy yeomanry of the far West were becoming impatient of this barrier, and indignant at the apparent indifference of Congress to their prayers for its removal. He had heard, moreover, that British emissaries were fostering these discontents, sowing the seeds of

disaffection, and offering assistance to the Western people to seize on the city of New Orleans and fortify the mouth of the Mississippi; while, on the other hand, the Spanish authorities at New Orleans were represented as intriguing to effect a separation of the Western territory from the Union, with a view or hope of attaching it to the dominion of Spain.

Great Britain, too, was giving grounds for territorial solicitude in these distant quarters by retaining possession of the Western posts, the surrender of which had been stipulated by treaty. Her plea was, that debts due to British subjects, for which by the same treaty the United States were bound, remained unpaid. This the Americans alleged was a mere pretext; the real object of their retention being the monopoly of the fur trade; and to the mischievous influence exercised by these posts over the Indian tribes, was attributed much of the hostile disposition manifested by the latter along the Western frontier.

While these brooding causes of anxiety existed at home, the foreign commerce of the Union was on a most unsatisfactory footing, and required prompt and thorough attention. It was subject to maraud, even by the corsairs of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, who captured American merchant vessels and carried their

crews into slavery; no treaty having yet been made with any of the Barbary powers excepting Morocco.

To complete the perplexities which beset the new government, the finances of the country were in a lamentable state. There was no money in the treasury. The efforts of the former government to pay or fund its debts, had failed; there was a universal state of indebtedness, foreign and domestic, and public credit was prostrate.

Such was the condition of affairs when Washington entered upon his new field of action. He was painfully aware of the difficulties and dangers of an undertaking in which past history and past experience afforded no precedents. "I walk, as it were, on untrodden ground," said he; "so many untoward circumstances may intervene in such a new and critical situation, that I shall feel an insuperable diffidence in my own abilities. I feel in the execution of my arduous office, how much I shall stand in need of the countenance and aid of every friend to myself, of every friend to the Revolution, and of every lover of good government." *

As yet he was without the support of constitutional advisers, the departments under the

* Letter to Edward Rutledge.

new government not being organized; he could turn with confidence, however, for counsel in an emergency to John Jay, who still remained at the head of affairs, where he had been placed in 1784. He was sure of sympathy also in his old comrade, General Knox, who continued to officiate as Secretary of War; while the affairs of the treasury were managed by a board, consisting of Samuel Osgood, Walter Livingston, and Arthur Lee. Among the personal friends not in office, to whom Washington felt that he could safely have recourse for aid in initiating the new government, was Alexander Hamilton. It is true, many had their doubts of his sincere adhesion to it. In the Convention in Philadelphia, he had held up the British Constitution as a model to be approached as nearly as possible, by blending some of the advantages of monarchy with the republican form. The form finally adopted was too low-toned for him: he feared it might prove feeble and inefficient; but he voted for it as the best attainable, advocated it in the State Convention in New York, and in a series of essays, collectively known as *The Federalist*, written conjunctively with Madison and Jay; and it was mainly through his efforts as a speaker and a writer that the Constitution was ultimately accepted. Still,

many considered him at heart a monarchist, and suspected him of being secretly bent upon bringing the existing government to the monarchical form. In this they did him injustice. He still continued, it is true, to doubt whether the republican theory would admit of a vigorous execution of the laws, but was clear that it ought to be adhered to as long as there was any chance for its success. "The idea of a perfect equality of political rights among the citizens, exclusive of all permanent or hereditary distinctions," had not hitherto, he thought, from an imperfect structure of the government, had a fair trial, and "was of a nature to engage the good wishes of every good man, whatever might be his theoretic doubts"; the endeavor, therefore, in his opinion, ought to be to give it "a better chance of success by a government more capable of energy and order." *

Washington, who knew and appreciated Hamilton's character, had implicit confidence in his sincerity, and felt assured that he would loyally aid in carrying into effect the Constitution as adopted.

It was a great satisfaction to Washington, on looking round for reliable advisers at this moment, to see James Madison among the

* Hamilton's *Writings*, iv., 273.

members of Congress; Madison, who had been with him in the convention, who had labored in the *Federalist*, and whose talents as a speaker, and calm, dispassionate reasoner, whose extensive information and legislative experience, destined him to be a leader in the House. Highly appreciating his intellectual and moral worth, Washington would often turn to him for counsel. "I am troublesome," would he say, "but you must excuse me; ascribe it to friendship and confidence."

Knox, of whose sure sympathies we have spoken, was in strong contrast with the cool statesman just mentioned. His mind was ardent and active, his imagination vivid, as was his language. He had abandoned the military garb, but still maintained his soldier-like air. He was large in person, above the middle stature, with a full face, radiant and benignant, speaking his open, buoyant, generous nature. He had a sonorous voice, and sometimes talked rather grandly, flourishing his cane to give effect to his periods.* He was cordially appreciated by Washington, who had experienced his prompt and efficient talent in time of war, had considered him one of the ablest officers of the Revolution, and now

* See Sullivan's *Letters on Public Characters*, p. 84.

looked to him as an energetic man of business, capable of giving practical advice in time of peace, and cherished for him that strong feeling of ancient companionship in toil and danger, which bound the veterans of the Revolution firmly to each other.

Chapter VIII.

Washington's Privacy Beset with Visits of Compliment—Queries as to the Proper Line of Conduct in His Presidential Intercourse—Opinions of Adams and Hamilton—Jefferson as to the Authors of the Minor Forms and Ceremonies—His Whimsical Anecdote of the First Levee—Inaugural Ball.

THE moment the inauguration was over Washington was made to perceive that he was no longer master of himself or of his home. "By the time I had done breakfast," writes he, "and thence till dinner, and afterwards till bedtime, I could not get rid of the ceremony of one visit before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters."

How was he to be protected from these intrusions? In his former capacity as commander-in-chief of the armies, his headquarters had been guarded by sentinels and military

etiquette; but what was to guard the privacy of a popular chief magistrate?

What, too, were to be the forms and ceremonials to be adopted in the presidential mansion, that would maintain the dignity of his station, allow him time for the performance of his official duties, and yet be in harmony with the temper and feelings of the people, and the prevalent notions of equality and republican simplicity?

The conflict of opinions that had already occurred as to the form and title by which the President was to be addressed, had made him aware that every step at the outset of his career would be subject to scrutiny, perhaps cavil, and might hereafter be cited as a precedent. Looking round, therefore, upon the able men at hand, such as Adams, Hamilton, Jay, Madison, he propounded to them a series of questions as to a line of conduct proper for him to observe.

In regard to visitors, for instance, would not one day in the week be sufficient for visits of compliment, and one hour every morning (at eight o'clock for example) for visits on business?

Might he make social visits to acquaintances and public characters, not as President, but as private individual? And then as to his table

—under the preceding form of government, the Presidents of Congress had been accustomed to give dinners twice a week to large parties of both sexes, and invitations had been so indiscriminate, that every one who could get introduced to the President conceived he had a right to be invited to his board. The table was, therefore, always crowded with a mixed company ; yet, as it was in the nature of things impracticable to invite everybody, as many offenses were given as if no table had been kept.

Washington was resolved not to give general entertainments of this kind, but in his series of questions he asked whether he might not invite, informally or otherwise, six, eight, or ten official characters, including in rotation the members of both Houses of Congress, to dine with him on the days fixed for receiving company, without exciting clamors in the rest of the community.

Adams in his reply talked of chamberlains, aides-de-camp, masters of ceremony, and evinced a high idea of the presidential office, and the state with which it ought to be maintained. "The office," writes he, "by its legal authority defined in the Constitution, has no equal in the world excepting those only which are held by crowned heads ; nor is the

royal authority in all cases to be compared to it. The royal office in Poland is a mere shadow in comparison with it. The Dogeship in Venice, and the Stadtholdership in Holland, are not so much—neither dignity nor authority can be supported in human minds, collected into nations or any great numbers, without a splendor and majesty in some degree proportioned to them. The sending and receiving ambassadors is one of the most splendid and important prerogatives of sovereigns, absolute or limited, and this in our Constitution is wholly in the President. If the state and pomp essential to this great department are not in a good degree preserved, it will be in vain for America to hope for consideration with foreign powers." *

According to Mr. Adams, two days in a week would be required for the receipt of visits of compliment. Persons desiring an interview with the President should make application through the minister of state. In every case the name, quality, or business of the visitor should be communicated to a chamberlain or gentleman in waiting, who should judge whom to admit, and whom to exclude. The time for receiving visits ought to be limited, as for example, from eight to nine or ten o'clock, lest

* *Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. viii., p. 943.

the whole morning be taken up. The President might invite what official character, members of Congress, strangers, or citizens of distinction he pleased, in small parties, without exciting clamors; but this should always be done without formality. His private life should be at his own discretion, as to giving or receiving informal visits among friends and acquaintances; but in his official character he should have no intercourse with society but upon public business, or at his levees. Adams, in the conclusion of his reply, ingenuously confessed that his long residence abroad might have impressed him with views of things incompatible with the present temper and feelings of his fellow-citizens; and Jefferson seems to have been heartily of the same opinion, for speaking of Adams in his *Anas*, he observes that "the glare of royalty and nobility, during his mission to England, had made him believe their fascination a necessary ingredient in government." * Hamilton, in his reply, while he considered it a primary object for the public good, that the dignity of the presidential office should be supported, advised that care should be taken to avoid so high a tone in the demeanor of the occupant, as to shock the prevalent notions of equality.

* Jefferson's *Works*, ix., 97.

The President, he thought, should hold a levee at a fixed time once a week, remain half an hour, converse cursorily on indifferent subjects with such persons as invited his attention, and then retire.

He should accept no invitations, give formal entertainments twice, or at most, four times in the year; if twice, on the anniversaries of the declaration of independence and of his inauguration: if four times, the anniversary of the treaty of alliance with France and that of the definitive treaty with Great Britain to be added.

The President on levee days to give informal invitations to family dinners; not more than six or eight to be asked at a time, and the civility to be confined essentially to members of the legislature, and other official characters—the President never to remain long at table.

The heads of departments should, of course, have access to the President on business. Foreign ministers of some descriptions should also be entitled to it. "In Europe, I am informed," writes Hamilton, "ambassadors only have direct access to the chief magistrate. Something very near what prevails there would, in my opinion, be right. The distinction of rank between diplomatic characters

requires attention, and the door of access ought not to be too wide to that class of persons. I have thought that the members of the Senate should also have a right of *individual* access on matters relative to the *public administration*. In England and France peers of the realm have this right. We have none such in this country, but I believe it will be satisfactory to the people to know that there is some body of men in the State who have a right of continual communication with the President. It will be considered a safeguard against secret combinations to deceive him." *

The reason alleged by Hamilton for giving the Senate this privilege, and not the Representatives, was, that in the Constitution "the Senate are coupled with the President in certain executive functions, treaties, and appointments. This makes them in a degree his constitutional counsellors, and gives them a peculiar claim to the right of access."

These are the only written replies that we have before us of Washington's advisers on this subject.

Colonel Humphreys, formerly one of Washington's aides-de-camps, and recently secretary of Jefferson's legation at Paris, was at present an inmate in the presidential mansion. Gen-

* Hamilton's *Works*, vol. iv., p. 3.

eral Knox was frequently there; to these Jefferson assures us, on Washington's authority, was assigned the task of considering and prescribing the minor forms and ceremonies, the etiquette, in fact, to be observed on public occasions. Some of the forms proposed by them, he adds, were adopted. Others were so highly strained that Washington absolutely rejected them. Knox was no favorite with Jefferson, who had no sympathies with the veteran soldier, and styles him a "man of parade," and Humphreys, he appears to think captivated by the ceremonials of foreign courts. He gives a whimsical account, which he had at a second or third hand, of the first levee. An antechamber and presence room were provided, and, when those who were to pay their court were assembled, the President set out, preceded by Humphreys. After passing through the antechamber, the door of the inner room was thrown open, and Humphreys entered first, calling out with a loud voice, "The President of the United States." The President was so much disconcerted with it that he did not recover in the whole time of the levee, and, when the company was gone, he said to Humphreys: "Well, you have taken me in once, but, by ——, you shall never take me in a second time."

This anecdote is to be taken with caution, for Jefferson was disposed to receive any report that placed the forms adopted in a disparaging point of view.

He gives in his *Ana* a still more whimsical account on the authority of "a Mr. Brown," of the ceremonials at an inaguration ball at which Washington and Mrs. Washington presided in almost regal style. As it has been proved to be entirely incorrect, we have not deemed it worthy an insertion. A splendid ball was in fact given at the Assembly Rooms, and another by the French minister, the Count de Moustier, at both of which Washington was present and danced; but Mrs. Washington was not at either of them, not being yet arrived, and on neither occasion were any mock regal ceremonials observed. Washington was the last man that would have tolerated anything of the kind. Our next chapter will show the almost casual manner in which the simple formalities of his republican court originated.

Chapter IX.

Journey of Mrs. Washington to New York—Honors Paid her in her Progress—Reception at the Seat of Government—The President's Equipage.

ON the 17th of May, Mrs. Washington, accompanied by her grandchildren, Eleanor Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, set out from Mount Vernon in her travelling carriage with a small escort of horse, to join her husband at the seat of government, as she had been accustomed to join him at headquarters, in the intervals of his Revolutionary campaigns.

Throughout the journey she was greeted with public testimonials of respect and affection. As she approached Philadelphia, the President of Pennsylvania and other of the State functionaries, with a number of the principal inhabitants of both sexes, came forth to meet her, and she was attended into the city

by a numerous cavalcade, and welcomed with the ringing of bells and firing of cannon.

Similar honors were paid her in her progress through New Jersey. At Elizabethtown she alighted at the residence of Governor Livingston, whither Washington came from New York to meet her. They proceeded thence by water, in the same splendid barge in which the general had been conveyed for his inauguration. It was manned, as on that occasion, by thirteen master pilots, arrayed in white, and had several persons of note on board. There was a salute of thirteen guns as the barge passed the Battery at New York. The landing took place at Peck Slip, not far from the presidential residence, amid the enthusiastic cheers of an immense multitude.

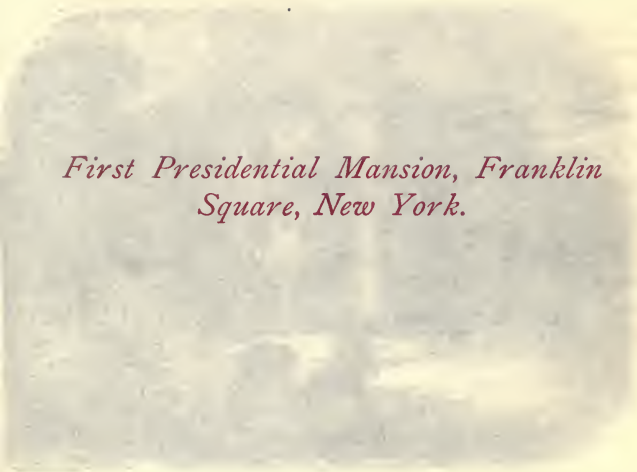
On the following day, Washington gave a demi-official dinner, of which Mr. Wingate, a senator from New Hampshire, who was present, writes as follows: "The guests consisted of the Vice-President, the foreign ministers, the heads of the departments, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senators from New Hampshire and Georgia, the then most Northern and Southern States. It was the least showy dinner that I ever saw at the President's table, and the company was not large. As there was no chaplain present, the

President himself said a very short grace as he was sitting down. After dinner and dessert were finished, *one glass* of wine was passed around the table, and *no toast.* The President rose, all the company retired to the drawing-room, from which the guests departed as every one chose, without ceremony."

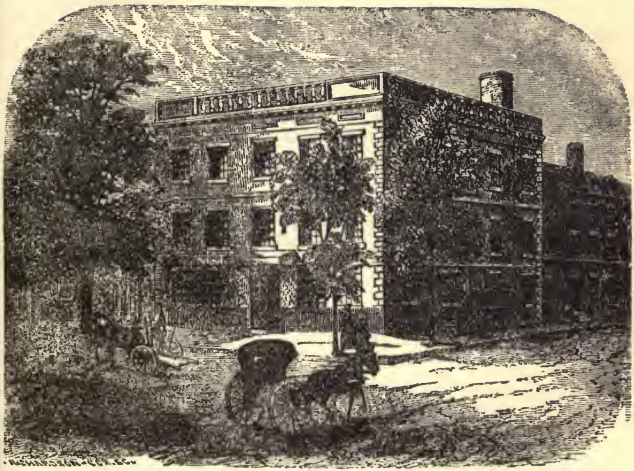
On the evening of the following day (Friday, May 29th), Mrs. Washington had a general reception, which was attended by all that was distinguished in official and fashionable society. Henceforward there were similar receptions every Friday evening, from eight to ten o'clock, to which the families of all persons of respectability, native or foreign, had access, without special invitation; and at which the President was always present. These assemblages were as free from ostentation and restraint as the ordinary receptions of polite society; yet the reader will find they were soon subject to invidious misrepresentation; and cavilled at as "court-like levees" and "queenly drawing-rooms."

Beside these public receptions, the presidential family had its private circle of social intimacy; the President, moreover, was always ready to receive visits by appointment on public or private business.

The sanctity and quiet of Sunday were strictly



First Presidential Mansion, Franklin Square, New York.



observed by Washington. He attended church in the morning, and passed the afternoon alone in his closet. No visitors were admitted, excepting perhaps an intimate friend in the evening, which was spent by him in the bosom of his family.

The household establishment was conducted on am ample and dignified scale, but without ostentation, and regulated with characteristic system and exactness. Samuel Fraunces, once landlord of the City Tavern in Broad Street, where Washington took leave of the officers of the army in 1783, was now steward of the presidential household. He was required to render a weekly statement of receipts and expenditures, and warned to guard against waste and extravagance. "We are happy to inform our readers," says Fenno's *Gazette* of the day, "that the President is determined to pursue that system of regularity and economy in his household which has always marked his public and private life."

In regard to the deportment of Washington at this juncture, we have been informed by one who had opportunities of seeing him, that he still retained a military air of command which had become habitual to him. At levees and drawing-rooms he sometimes appeared cold and distant, but this was attributed by those who

best knew him to the novelty of his position and his innate diffidence, which seemed to increase with the light which his renown shed about him. Though reserved at times, his reserve had nothing repulsive in it, and in social intercourse, where he was no longer under the eye of critical supervision, soon gave way to soldier-like frankness and cordiality. At all times his courtesy was genuine and benignant, and totally free from that stately condescension sometimes mistaken for politeness. Nothing, we are told, could surpass the noble grace with which he presided at a ceremonial dinner; kindly attentive to all his guests, but particularly attentive to put those at their ease and in a favorable light, who appeared to be most diffident.

As to Mrs. Washington, those who really knew her at the time, speak of her as free from pretension or affectation; undazzled by her position, and discharging its duties with the truthful simplicity and real good-breeding of one accustomed to preside over a hospitable mansion in the "Ancient Dominion." She had her husband's predilection for private life. In a letter to an intimate she writes: "It is owing to the kindness of our numerous friends in all quarters that my new and unwished for situation is not indeed a burden to me. When I

was much younger, I should probably have enjoyed the innocent gayeties of life as much as most persons of my age, but I had long since placed all the prospects of my future worldly happiness in the still enjoyments of the fireside at Mount Vernon.

"I little thought, when the war was finished, that any circumstances could possibly happen, which would call the general into public life again. I had anticipated that from that moment we should be suffered to grow old together in solitude and tranquillity. That was the first and dearest wish of my heart." *

Much has been said of Washington's equipages, when at New York, and of his having four, and sometimes six horses before his carriage, with servants and outriders in rich livery. Such style, we would premise, was usual at the time both in England and the colonies, and had been occasionally maintained by the Continental dignitaries, and by governors of the several States, prior to the adoption of the new Constitution. It was still prevalent, we are told, among the wealthy planters of the South, and sometimes adopted by "merchant princes" and rich individuals at the North. It does not appear, however, that Washington

* Quoted in a note to Sparks, p. 422.

ever indulged in it through ostentation. When he repaired to the Hall of Congress, at his inauguration, he was drawn by a single pair of horses in a chariot presented for the occasion, on the panels of which were emblazoned the arms of the United States.

Besides this modest equipage there was the ample family carriage which had been brought from Virginia. To this four horses were put when the family drove out into the country, the state of the roads in those days requiring it. For the same reason six horses were put to the same vehicle on journeys, and once on a state occasion. If there was anything he was likely to take a pride in, it was horses ; he was passionately fond of that noble animal, and mention is occasionally made of four white horses of great beauty which he owned while in New York. * His favorite exercise when the

* For some of these particulars concerning Washington we are indebted to the late William A. Duer, president of Columbia College, who in his boyhood was frequently in the President's house, playmate of young Custis, Mrs. Washington's grandson.

Washington's Residence in New York.—The first presidential residence was at the junction of Pearl and Cherry streets, Franklin Square. At the end of about a year, the President removed to the house on the west side of Broadway, near Rector Street, afterwards known as Bunker's Mansion House. Both of these

weather permitted it was on horseback, accompanied by one or more of the members of his household, and he was noted always for being admirably mounted, and one of the best horsemen of his day.

buildings have disappeared, in the course of modern "improvements."

Chapter X.

Alarming Illness of the President—The Senate Rejects One of his Nominations—His Sensitive Vindication of it—Death of his Mother—Her Character—The Executive Departments Instituted—Selection of Officers for the Treasury and War Departments—Hamilton Instructed to Report a Financial Plan at the Next Session of Congress—Arrangement of the Judiciary Department—Edmund Randolph—Adjournment of Congress—Its Character, by Fisher Ames.

AS soon as Washington could command sufficient leisure to inspect papers and documents, he called unofficially upon the heads of departments to furnish him with such reports in writing as would aid him in gaining a distinct idea of the state of public affairs. For this purpose also he had recourse to the public archives, and proceeded to make notes of the foreign official correspondence from the close of the war until his

inauguration. He was interrupted in his task by a virulent attack of anthrax, which for several days threatened mortification. The knowledge of his perilous condition spread alarm through the community: he, however, remained unagitated. His medical adviser was Dr. Samuel Bard, of New York, an excellent physician and most estimable man, who attended him with unremitting assiduity. Being alone one day with the doctor, Washington regarded him steadily, and asked his candid opinion as to the probable result of his case. "Do not flatter me with vain hopes," said he, with placid firmness; "I am not afraid to die, and therefore can bear the worst." The doctor expressed hope, but owned that he had apprehensions. "Whether to-night or twenty years hence, makes no difference," observed Washington. "I know that I am in the hands of a good Providence." His sufferings were intense, and his recovery very slow. For six weeks he was obliged to lie on his right side; but after a time he had his carriage so contrived that he could extend himself at full length in it, and take exercise in the open air.

While rendered morbidly sensitive by bodily pain, he suffered deep annoyance from having one of his earliest nominations, that of Benjamin Fishburn, for the place of naval officer

of the port of Savannah, rejected by the Senate.

If there was anything in which Washington was scrupulously conscientious, it was in the exercise of the nominating power; scrutinizing the fitness of candidates; their comparative claims on account of public services and sacrifices, and with regard to the equable distribution of offices among the States; in all which he governed himself solely by considerations for the public good. He was especially scrupulous where his own friends and connections were concerned. "So far as I know my own mind," would he say, "I would not be in the remotest degree influenced in making nominations by motives arising from the ties of family or blood."

He was principally hurt in the present instance by the want of deference on the part of the Senate, in assigning no reason for rejecting his nomination of Mr. Fishburn. He acquiesced, however, in the rejection; and forthwith sent in the name of another candidate; but at the same time administered a temperate and dignified rebuke. "Whatever may have been the reasons which induced your dissent," writes he to the Senate, "I am persuaded that they were such as you deemed sufficient. Permit me to submit to your con-

sideration, whether, on occasions where the propriety of nominations appears questionable to you, it would not be expedient to communicate that circumstance to me, and thereby avail yourselves of the information which led me to make them, and which I would with pleasure lay before you. Probably my reasons for nominating Mr. Fishburn may tend to show that such a mode of proceeding, in such cases, might be useful. I will therefore detail them."

He then proceeds to state, that Colonel Fishburn had served under his own eye with reputation as an officer and a gentleman; had distinguished himself at the storming of Stony Point; had repeatedly been elected to the Assembly of Georgia as a representative from Chatham County, in which Savannah was situated; had been elected by the officers of the militia of that county lieutenant-colonel of the militia of the district; had been member of the Executive Council of the State, and president of the same; had been appointed by the Council to an office which he actually held, in the port of Savannah nearly similar to that for which Washington had nominated him.

"It appeared therefore to me," adds Washington, "that Mr. Fishburn must have enjoyed the *confidence* of the militia officers in order to have been elected to a military rank—the *con-*

fidence of the freemen, to have been elected to the Assembly—the *confidence* of the Assembly to have been selected for the Council, and the *confidence* of the Council, to have been appointed collector of the port of Savannah."

We give this letter in some detail, as relating to the only instance in which a nomination by Washington was rejected. The reasons of the Senate for rejecting it do not appear. They seem to have felt his rebuke, for the nomination last made by him was instantly confirmed.

While yet in a state of convalescence, Washington received intelligence of the death of his mother. The event, which took place at Fredericksburg in Virginia, on the 25th of August, was not unexpected; she was eighty-two years of age, and had for some time been sinking under an incurable malady, so that when he last parted with her he had apprehended that it was a final separation. Still he was deeply affected by the intelligence; consoling himself, however, with the reflection that "Heaven had spared her to an age beyond which few attain; had favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily health as usually falls to the lot of fourscore."

Mrs. Mary Washington is represented as a woman of strong plain sense, strict integrity,

and an inflexible spirit of command. We have mentioned the exemplary manner in which she, a lone widow, had trained her little flock in their childhood. The deference for her, then instilled into their minds, continued throughout life, and was manifested by Washington when at the height of his power and reputation. Eminently practical, she had thwarted his military aspirings when he was about to seek honor in the British navy. During his early and disastrous campaigns on the frontier, she would often shake her head and exclaim, "Ah, George had better have staid at home and cultivated his farm." Even his ultimate success and renown had never dazzled, however much they may have gratified her. When others congratulated her, and were enthusiastic in his praise, she listened in silence, and would temperately reply that he had been a good son, and she believed he had done his duty as a man.

Hitherto the new government had not been properly organized, but its several duties had been performed by the officers who had them in charge at the time of Washington's inauguration. It was not until the 10th of September that laws were passed instituting a department of Foreign Affairs (afterwards termed Department of State), a Treasury department, and a

department of War, and fixing their respective salaries. On the following day Washington nominated General Knox to the Department of War, the duties of which that officer had hitherto discharged.

The post of Secretary of the Treasury was one of far greater importance at the present moment. It was a time of financial exigency. As yet no statistical account of the country had been attempted; its fiscal resources were wholly unknown; its credit was almost annihilated, for it was obliged to borrow money even to pay the interest of its debts.

We have already quoted the language held by Washington in regard to this state of things before he had assumed the direction of affairs. "My endeavors shall be unremittingly exerted, even at the hazard of former fame, or present popularity, to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled through want of credit."

Under all these circumstances, and to carry out these views, he needed an able and zealous coadjutor in the Treasury Department; one equally solicitous with himself on the points in question, and more prepared upon them by financial studies and investigations than he could pretend to be. Such a person he considered Alexander Hamilton, whom he nomi-

nated as Secretary of the Treasury, and whose qualifications for the office were so well understood by the Senate that his nomination was confirmed on the same day on which it was made.

Within a few days after Hamilton's appointment, the House of Representatives (September 21st), acting upon the policy so ardently desired by Washington, passed a resolution, declaring their opinion of the high importance to the honor and prosperity of the United States, that an adequate provision should be made for the support of public credit; and instructing the Secretary of the Treasury to prepare a plan for the purpose, and report it at their next session.

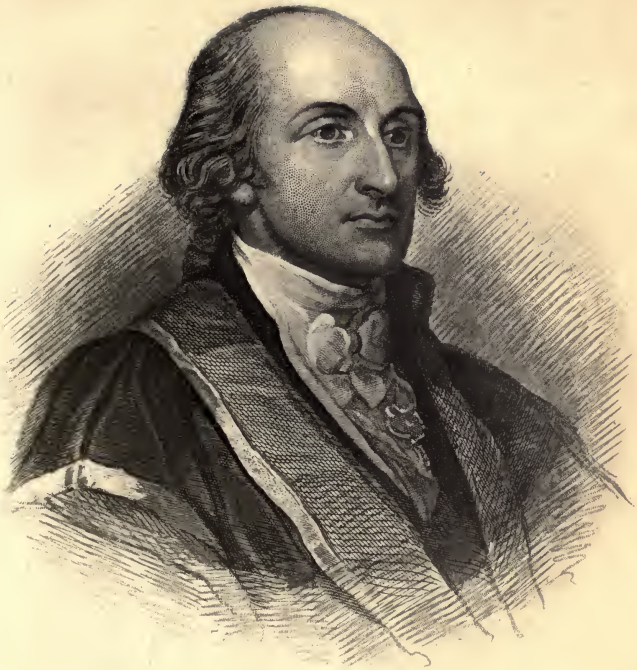
The arrangement of the Judicial Department was one of Washington's earliest cares. On the 27th of September, he wrote unofficially to Edmund Randolph, of Virginia, informing him that he had nominated him Attorney-General of the United States, and would be highly gratified with his acceptance of that office. Some old recollections of the camp and of the early days of the Revolution, may have been at the bottom of this good-will, for Randolph had joined the army at Cambridge in 1775, and acted for a time as aide-de-camp to Washington in place of Mifflin. He had since gained ex-

perience in legislative business as member of Congress, from 1779 to 1782, governor of Virginia in 1786, and delegate to the convention in 1787. In the discussions of that celebrated body, he had been opposed to a single executive, professing to discern in the unity of that power the "fœtus of monarchy"; and preferring an executive consisting of three; whereas, in the opinion of others, this plural executive would be "a kind of Cerberus with three heads." Like Madison, he had disapproved of the equality of suffrage in the Senate, and been, moreover, of opinion, that the President should be ineligible to office after a given number of years.

Dissatisfied with some of the provisions of the Constitution as adopted, he had refused to sign it; but had afterward supported it in the State Convention of Virginia. As we recollect him many years afterward, his appearance and address were dignified and prepossessing: he had an expressive countenance, a beaming eye, and somewhat of the *ore rotundo* in speaking. Randolph promptly accepted the nomination, but did not take his seat in the cabinet until some months after Knox and Hamilton.

By the judicial system established for the Federal Government, the Supreme Court of the United States was to be composed of a

John Jay—First Chief-Justice of the United States.



chief justice and five associate judges. There were to be district courts with a judge in each State, and circuit courts held by an associate judge and a district judge. John Jay, of New York, received the appointment of Chief Justice, and in a letter inclosing his commission, Washington expressed the singular pleasure he felt in addressing him "as the head of that department which must be considered as the keystone of our political fabric."

Jay's associate judges were, John Rutledge of South Carolina, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, William Cushing of Massachusetts, John Blair of Virginia, and James Iredell of North Carolina. Washington had originally nominated to one of the judgeships his former military secretary, Robert Harrison, familiarly known as *the old Secretary;* but he preferred the office of chancellor of Maryland, recently conferred upon him.

On the 29th of September, Congress adjourned to the first Monday in January, after an arduous session, in which many important questions had been discussed, and powers organized and distributed. The actual Congress was inferior in eloquence and shining talent to the first Congress of the Revolution; but it possessed men well fitted for the momentous work before them; sober, solid, upright, and well

informed. An admirable harmony had prevailed between the legislature and the executive, and the utmost decorum had reigned over the public deliberations.

Fisher Ames, then a young man, who had acquired a brilliant reputation in Massachusetts by the eloquence with which he had championed the new Constitution in the convention of that important State, and who had recently been elected to Congress, speaks of it in the following terms: "I have never seen an assembly where so little art was used. If they wish to carry a point, it is directly declared and justified. Its merits and defects are plainly stated, not without sophistry and prejudice, but without management. . . . There is no intrigue, no caucusing, little of clanning together, little asperity in debase, or personal bitterness out of the House."

Chapter XI.

The Department of State Still without a Head—Sketch of Jefferson's Character and Opinions—Deeply Immersed in French Politics at Paris—Gouverneur Morris Abroad — Contrast of his and Jefferson's Views of the French Crisis—News of the French Revolution in America — Popular Excitement — Washington's Cautious Opinion on the Subject—Hamilton's Apprehensive View—Jefferson Offered a Place in the Cabinet as Secretary of State.

THE cabinet was still incomplete, the department of foreign affairs, or rather of State, as it was now called, was yet to be supplied with a head. John Jay would have received the nomination had he not preferred the bench. Washington next thought of Thomas Jefferson, who had so long filled the post of minister plenipotentiary at the Court of Versailles, but had recently solicited and obtained permission to return, for a few months, to the United States for the purpose of placing his children among their friends

in their native country, and of arranging his private affairs, which had suffered from his protracted absence. And here we will venture a few particulars concerning this eminent statesman, introductory to the important influence he was to exercise on national affairs.

His political principles as a democratic republican, had been avowed at an early date in his draft of the Declaration of Independence, and subsequently in the successful war which he made upon the old cavalier traditions of his native State, its laws of entails and primogeniture, and its church establishment—a war which broke down the hereditary fortunes and hereditary families, and put an end to the hereditary aristocracy of the Ancient Dominion.

Being sent to Paris as minister plenipotentiary a year or two after the peace, he arrived there, as he says, "when the American Revolution seemed to have awakened the thinking part of the French nation from the sleep of despotism in which they had been sunk."

Carrying with him his republican principles and zeal, his house became the resort of Lafayette and others of the French officers who had served in the American Revolution. They were mostly, he said, young men little shackled by habits and prejudices, and had come back with new ideas and new impressions which

began to be disseminated by the press and in conversation. Politics became the theme of all societies, male and female, and a very extensive and zealous party was formed which acquired the appellation of the Patriot Party, who, sensible of the abuses of the government under which they lived, sighed for occasions of reforming it. "This party," writes Jefferson, "comprehended all the honesty of the kingdom sufficiently at leisure to think, the men of letters, the easy bourgeois, the young nobility, partly from reflection, partly from the mode; for these sentiments became matter of mode, and, as such, united most of the young women to the party."

By this party Jefferson was considered high authority from his republican principles and experience, and his advice was continually sought in the great effort for political reform which was daily growing stronger and stronger. His absence in Europe had prevented his taking part in the debates on the new Constitution, but he had exercised his influence through his correspondence. "I expressed freely," writes he, "in letters to my friends, and most particularly to Mr. Madison and General Washington, my approbations and objections."* What those approbations and objections were

* Autobiography, *Works*, i., 79.

appears by the following citations, which are important to be kept in mind as illustrating his after-conduct:

"I approved, from the first moment, of the great mass of what is in the new Constitution, the consolidation of the government, the organization into executive, legislative, and judiciary; the subdivision of the legislature, the happy compromise of the interests between the great and little States, by the different manner of voting in the different Houses, the voting by persons instead of States, the qualified negative on laws given to the executive, which, however, I should have liked better if associated with the judiciary also, as in New York, and the power of taxation: what I disapproved from the first moment, was the want of a Bill of Rights to guard liberty against the legislative as well as against the executive branches of the government; that is to say, to secure freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom from monoplies, freedom from unlawful imprisonment, freedom from a permanent military, and a trial by jury in all cases determinable by the laws of the land."

What he greatly objected to was the perpetual re-eligibility of the President. "This, I fear," said he, "will make that an office for life, first, and then hereditary. I was much

an enemy to monarchies before I came to Europe, and am ten thousand times more so since I have seen what they are. There is scarcely an evil known in these countries which may not be traced to their king as its source, nor a good which is not derived from the small fibres of republicanism existing among them. I can further say, with safety, there is not a crowned head in Europe whose talents or merits would entitle him to be elected a vestryman by the people of any parish in America." *

In short, such a horror had he imbibed of kingly rule, that, in a familiar letter to Colonel Humphreys, who had been his secretary of legation, he gives it as a duty of our young republic "to besiege the throne of heaven with eternal prayers to extirpate from creation this class of human lions, tigers, and mammoths, called kings, from whom, let him perish who does not say, 'Good Lord, deliver us!'"

Jefferson's political fervor occasionally tended to exaltation, but it was genuine. In his excited state he regarded with quick suspicion everything in his own country that appeared to him to have a regal tendency. His sensitiveness had been awakened by the debates in Congress as to the title to be given to the

* Letter to Washington, May 2, 1788. *Works*, ii. 375.

President, whether or not he should be addressed as His Highness; and had been relieved by the decision that he was to have no title but that of office, namely, President of the United States. "I hope," said Jefferson, "the terms of Excellency, Honor, Worship, Esquire, forever disappear from among us from that moment. I wish that of Mr. would follow them." *

With regard to the re-eligibility of the President, his anxiety was quieted for the present, by the elevation of Washington to the presidential chair. "Since the thing [re-eligibility] is established," writes he, "I would wish it not to be altered during the lifetime of our great leader, whose executive talents are superior to those, I believe, of any man in the world, and who, alone, by the authority of his name, and the confidence reposed in his perfect integrity, is fully qualified to put the new government so under way as to secure it against the efforts of opposition. But, having derived from our error all the good there was in it, I hope we shall correct it the moment we can no longer have the same name at the helm." †

Jefferson, at the time of which we are speaking, was, as we have shown, deeply immersed

* Letter to Mr. Carmichael. *Works*, iii., 88.

† Letter to F. Hopkinson. *Works*, ii., 587.

in French politics and interested in the success of the "Patriot Party," in its efforts to reform the country. His despatches to government all proved how strongly he was on the side of the people. "He considered a successful reformation in France as insuring a general reformation throughout Europe, and the resurrection to a new life of their people now ground to dust by the abuses of the governing powers."

Gouverneur Morris, who was at that time in Paris on private business, gives a different view of the state of things produced by the Patriot Party. Morris had arrived in Paris on the 3d of February, 1789, furnished by Washington with letters of introduction to persons in England, France, and Holland. His brilliant talents, ready conversational powers, easy confidence in society, and striking aristocratical appearance, had given him great currency, especially in the court party and among the ancient nobility, in which direction his tastes most inclined. He had renewed his intimacy with Lafayette whom he found "full of politics," but "too republican for the genius of his country."

In a letter to the French Minister, residing in New York, Morris writes on the 23d of February, 1789: "Your nation is now in a most important crisis, and the great question—shall

we hereafter have a constitution, or shall will continue to be law—employs every mind and agitates every heart in France. Even voluptuousness itself rises from its couch of roses and looks anxiously abroad at the busy scene to which nothing can now be indifferent.

"Your nobles, your clergy, your people, are all in motion for the elections. A spirit which has been dormant for generations starts up and stares about, ignorant of the means of obtaining, but ardently desirous to possess its object—consequently active, energetic, easily led, but also easily, too easily, misled. Such is the instinctive love of freedom which now grows warm in the bosom of your country."

When the king was constrained by the popular voice to convene the States General at Versailles for the purpose of discussing measures of reform, Jefferson was a constant attendant upon the debates of that body. "I was much acquainted with the leading patriots of the Assembly," writes he, "being from a country which had successfully passed through similar reform; they were disposed to my acquaintance and had some confidence in me. I urged most strenuously an immediate compromise to secure what the government was now ready to yield, and trust to future occasions for what might still be wanting."

The "leading patriots" here spoken of, were chiefly the deputies from Brittany, who, with others, formed an association called the Breton Club, to watch the matters debated in Parliament and shape the course of affairs.

Morris, speaking of Jefferson at this juncture, observes: "He and I differ in our system of politics. He, with all the leaders of liberty here, is desirous of annihilating distinctions of order. How far such views may be right, respecting mankind in general, is, I think, extremely problematical. But, with respect to this nation, I am sure it is wrong and cannot eventuate well." *

Jefferson, in a letter to Thomas Paine (July 11th), giving some account of the proceedings of the States General, observes: "The National Assembly (for that is the name they take) having shown, through every stage of these transactions, a coolness, wisdom, and resolution to set fire to the four corners of the kingdom, and to perish with it themselves rather than to relinquish an iota from their plan of a total change of government, are now in complete and undisputed possession of the Sovereignty. The executive and aristocracy are at their feet; the mass of the nation, the mass of the clergy, and the army are with them;

* *Life of G. Morris*, i. 313.

they have prostrated the old government, and are now beginning to build one from the foundation."

It was but three days after the date of this letter that the people of Paris rose in their might, plundered the arsenal of the Invalides, furnished themselves with arms, stormed the Bastile; and a national guard, formed of the Bourgeoisie, with the tricolored cockade for an emblem and Lafayette as commander, took Paris under its protection.

Information of these events was given at midnight to the king at Versailles by Rochefoucauld-Liancourt. "It is a revolt," exclaimed the king. "Sire," replied Liancourt, "*it is a revolution!*"

Jefferson, in his despatches to government, spoke with admiration of the conduct of the people throughout the violent scenes which accompanied this popular convulsion. "There was a severity of honesty observed, of which no example has been known. Bags of money, offered on various occasions through fear or guilt, have been uniformly refused by the mobs. The churches are now occupied in singing '*De Profundis*' and '*Requiems*' for the repose of the souls of the brave and valiant citizens who have sealed, with their blood, the liberty of the nation. . . . We cannot sup-

pose this paroxysm confined to Paris alone; the whole country must pass successively through it, and happy if they get through as soon and as well as Paris has done."*

Gouverneur Morris, writing on the same subject to Washington, on the 31st of July, observes: "You may consider the revolution as complete. The authority of the king and of the nobility is completely subdued; yet I tremble for the constitution. They have all the romantic spirit and all the romantic ideas of government, which, happily for America, we were cured of before it was too late."

The foregoing brief notices of affairs in revolutionary France, and of the feelings with which they were viewed by American statesmen resident there, will be found of service in illustrating subsequent events in the United States.

The first news of the revolution reached America in October, and was hailed by the great mass of the people with enthusiasm. Washington, in reply to his old comrade in arms, the Count de Rochambeau, observes: "I am persuaded I express the sentiments of my fellow-citizens, when I offer an earnest prayer that it may terminate in the permanent honor and happiness of your government and people."

*Letter to John Jay. Jefferson's *Works*, iii., 80.

But, in a reply of the same date (13th October) to Gouverneur Morris, he shows that his circumspect and cautious spirit was not to be hurried away by popular excitement. "The revolution which has been effected in France," writes he, "is of so wonderful a nature, that the mind can hardly realize the fact. If it ends as our last accounts to the 1st of August predict, that nation will be the most powerful and happy in Europe; but I fear, though it has gone triumphantly through the first paroxysm, it is not the last it has to encounter before matters are finally settled. In a word, the revolution is of too great a magnitude to be effected in so short a space, and with the loss of so little blood. The mortification of the king, the intrigues of the queen, and the discontent of the princes and noblesse, will foment divisions, if possible, in the National Assembly; and they will, unquestionably, avail themselves of every *faux pas* in the information of the constitution, if they do not give a more open, active opposition. In addition to these, the licentiousness of the people on one hand, and sanguinary punishments on the other, will alarm the best disposed friends to the measure, and contribute not a little to the overthrow of their object. Great temperance, firmness, and foresight are necessary in the movements of

that body. To forbear running from one extreme to another is no easy matter: and should this be the case, rocks and shelves, not visible at present, may wreck the vessel and give a higher-toned despotism than the one which existed before." *

Hamilton, too, regarded the recent events in France with a mixture of pleasure and apprehension. In a letter to Lafayette he writes: "As a friend to mankind and to liberty, I rejoice in the efforts which you are making to establish it, while I fear much for the final success of the attempts, for the fate of those who are engaged in it, and for the danger, in case of success, of innovations greater than will consist with the real felicity of your nation. . . . I dread disagreements among those who are now united, about the nature of your constitution; I dread the vehement character of your people, whom, I fear, you may find it more easy to bring on, than to keep within proper bounds after you have put them in motion. I dread the interested refractoriness of your nobles, who cannot all be gratified, and who may be unwilling to submit to the requisite sacrifices. And I dread the reveries of your philosophic politicians, who appear in the moment to have great influence, and who, being

* *Writings of Washington*, x., 39.

mere speculatists, may aim at more refinement than suits either with human nature or the composition of your nation." *

The opposite views and feelings of Hamilton and Jefferson, with regard to the French revolution, are the more interesting, as these eminent statesmen were soon to be brought face to face in the cabinet, the policy of which would be greatly influenced by French affairs; for it was at this time that Washington wrote to Jefferson, offering him the situation of Secretary of State, but forbearing to nominate a successor to his post at the Court of Versailles, until he should be informed of his determination.

* Hamilton's *Works*, v., 440.

Chapter XIII.

Washington's Journey through the Eastern States—John Hancock—Clashing between the Civil and Municipal Authorities on the President's Entry into Boston—A Contest of Etiquette—Washington's Account of his Entry—His Reception—A New Punctilio—Address of the Cincinnati Society—Return to New York.

AT the time of writing the letter to Jefferson, offering him the Department of State, Washington was on the eve of a journey through the Eastern States, with a view, as he said, to observe the situation of the country, and with a hope of perfectly re-establishing his health, which a series of indispositions had much impaired. Having made all his arrangements, and left the papers appertaining to the office of Foreign Affairs under the temporary superintendence of Mr. Jay, he set out from New York on the 15th of October, travelling in his carriage with four

horses, and accompanied by his official secretary, Major Jackson, and his private secretary, Mr. Lear. Though averse from public parade, he could not but be deeply affected and gratified at every step by the manifestations of a people's love. Wherever he came, all labor was suspended; business neglected. The bells were rung, the guns were fired; there were civic processions and military parades, and triumphal arches, and all classes poured forth to testify, in every possible manner, their gratitude and affection for the man whom they hailed as the father of his country; and well did his noble stature, his dignified demeanor, his matured years, and his benevolent aspect, suit that venerable appellation.

On the 22d, just after entering Massachusetts, he was met by an express from the governor of the State (the Hon. John Hancock), inviting him to make his quarters at his house while he should remain in Boston, and announcing to him that he had issued orders for proper escorts to attend him, and that the troops with the gentlemen of the council would receive him at Cambridge and wait on him to town.

Washington, in a courteous reply, declined the governor's invitation to his residence, having resolved, he said, on leaving New York,

to accept of no invitations of the kind while on his journey, through an unwillingness to give trouble to private families. He had accordingly instructed a friend to engage lodgings for him during his stay in Boston. He was highly sensible, he observed, of the honors intended him; but, could his wishes prevail, he would desire to visit the metropolis without any parade or extraordinary ceremony. It was never Washington's good fortune, on occasions of the kind, to have his modest inclinations consulted; in the present instance they were little in accord with the habits and notions of the governor, who, accustomed to fill public stations and preside at public assemblies, which he did with the punctilio of the old school, was strictly observant of everything appertaining to official rank and dignity. Governor Hancock was now about fifty-two years of age, tall and thin, of a commanding deportment and graceful manner, though stooping a little and much afflicted with the gout. He was really hospitable, which his ample wealth enabled him to be, and was no doubt desirous of having Washington as a guest under his roof, but resolved, at all events, to give him a signal reception as the guest of the State over which he presided. Now it so happened that the "selectmen," or municipal authorities of Boston, had

also made arrangements for receiving the President in their civic domain, and in so doing had proceeded without consulting the governor; as might have been expected, some clashing of rival plans was the result.

In pursuance of the governor's arrangement, the militia, with General Brooks at their head, and Mr. Samuel Adams, the lieutenant-governor, at the head of the executive council, met Washington at Cambridge, and escorted him with great ceremony to town. Being arrived at the grand entrance, which is over what is called "The Neck," the lieutenant-governor and the executive council were brought to a sudden halt by observing the municipal authorities drawn up in their carriages, in formal array, to pay civic honors to the city's guest. Here ensued a great question of etiquette. The executive council insisted on the right of the governor, as chief of the State, to receive and welcome its guest, at the entrance of its capital. "He should have met him at the boundary of the State over which he presides," replied the others; "and there have welcomed him to the hospitalities of the commonwealth. When the President is about to enter the *town*, it is the delegated right of the *municipal authorities* thereof to receive and bid him welcome."

The contending parties remained drawn up resolutely in their carriages, while aides-de-camp and marshals were posting to and fro between them, carrying on a kind of diplomatic parley.

In the meantime the President, and Major Jackson, his secretary, had mounted on horseback, and were waiting on the Neck to be conducted into the town. The day was unusually cold and murky. Washington became chilled and impatient, and when informed of the cause of the detention, "Is there no other avenue into the town?" demanded he of Major Jackson. He was, in fact, on the point of wheeling about, when word was brought that the controversy was over, and that he would be received by the municipal authorities.

We give his own account of the succeeding part of the ceremony. "At the entrance, I was welcomed by the selectmen in a body. Then following the lieutenant-governor and council in the order we came from Cambridge (preceded by the town corps, very handsomely dressed), we passed through the citizens, classed in their different professions, and under their own banners, till we came to the State-house."

The streets, the doors, the windows, the housetops, were crowded with well-dressed

people of both sexes. "He was on horseback," says an observer, "dressed in his old Continental uniform, with his hat off. He did not bow to the spectators as he passed, but sat on his horse with a calm, dignified air. He dismounted at the Old State-house, now City Hall,* and came out on a temporary balcony at the west end; a long procession passed before him, whose salutations he occasionally returned. These and other ceremonials being over, the lieutenant-governor and council, accompanied by the Vice-President, conducted Washington to his lodgings, where they took leave of him." And now he is doomed to the annoyance of the new question of etiquette. He had previously accepted the invitation of Governor Hancock to an informal dinner, but had expected that that functionary would wait upon him as soon as he should arrive; instead of which he received a message from him, pleading that he was too much indisposed to do so. Washington distrusted the sincerity of the apology. He had been given to understand that the governor wished to evade paying the first visit, conceiving that, as governor of a State, and within the bounds of that State, the point of etiquette made it proper that he should receive the first visit, even from the President

* This was written some years ago.

of the United States. Washington determined to resist this pretension; he therefore excused himself from the informal dinner, and dined at his lodgings, where the Vice-President favored him with his company.

The next day the governor, on consultation with his friends, was persuaded to waive the point of etiquette, and sent "his best respects to the President," informing him that, if at home and at leisure, he would do himself the honor to visit him in half an hour, intimating that he would have done it sooner, had his health permitted, and that it was not without hazard to his health he did it now.

The following was Washington's reply, the last sentence of which almost savors of irony:

"SUNDAY, 26th October, 1 o'clock.

"The President of the United States presents his best respects to the Governor, and has the honor to inform him that he shall be home till two o'clock.

"The President need not express the pleasure it will give him to see the Governor; but at the same time, he most earnestly begs that the Governor will not hazard his health on the occasion."

From Washington's diary we find that the governor found strength enough to pay the

litigated visit within the specified time—though according to one authority, he went enveloped in red baize, and was borne, in the arms of servants, into the house.*

It does not appear that any harm resulted from the hazard to which the governor exposed himself. At all events, the hydra Etiquette was silenced and everything went on pleasantly and decorously throughout the remainder of Washington's sojourn in Boston.

Various addresses were made to him in the course of his visit, but none that reached his heart more directly than that of his old companions in arms, the Cincinnati Society of Massachusetts, who hailed him as "their glorious leader in war, their illustrious example in peace."

"Dear, indeed," said he in reply, "is the occasion which restores an intercourse with my associates in prosperous and adverse fortune; and enhanced are the triumphs of peace participated with those whose virtue and valor so largely contributed to procure them. To that virtue and valor your country has confessed her obligations. Be mine the grateful task to add to the testimony of a connection which it was my pride to own in the field, and is now

* Sullivan's *Letters on Public Characters*, p. 15.

my happiness to acknowledge in the enjoyments of peace and freedom."

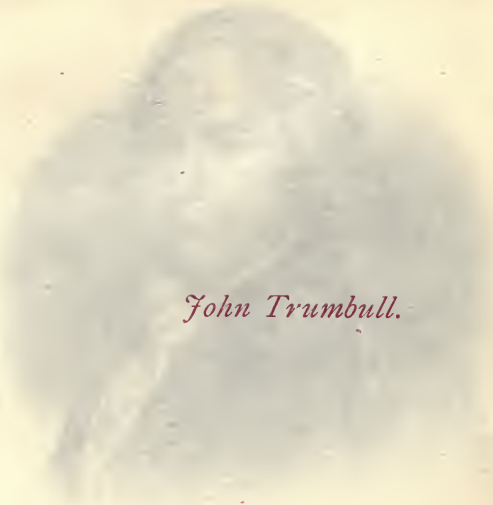
After remaining in Boston for a week, fêted in the most hospitable manner, he appointed eight o'clock, on Thursday the 29th, for his departure. The appointed time arrived, but not the escort; whereupon, punctual himself, and fearing, perhaps, to be detained by some new question of etiquette, he departed without them, and was overtaken by them on the road.

His journey eastward terminated at Portsmouth, whence he turned his face homeward by a middle route through the interior of the country to Hartford, and thence to New York, where he arrived between two and three o'clock on the 13th of November.

Chapter XIII.

Colonel John Trumbull—Message to Washington from Lafayette—Jefferson's Embarkation for America—Washington Forwards his Commission as Secretary of State—His Acceptance.

NOT long after Washington's return from his eastern tour, Colonel John Trumbull, his aide-de-camp in former days, now an historical painter of eminence, arrived from Europe, where he had been successfully prosecuting his art and preparing for his grand pictures, illustrative of our revolutionary history. At Mr. Jefferson's house in Paris, he had been enabled to sketch from the life the portraits of several of the French officers who had been present at the capture of Cornwallis, and were now among the popular agitators of France. He had renewed his military acquaintance with Lafayette; witnessed the outbreak of the revolution; the storming of the Bastile; and attended the



John Trumbull.

marquis on one occasion, when the latter succeeded in calming the riotous excesses of a mob, principally workmen, in the Faubourg St. Antoine.

Trumbull brought an especial message from Lafayette. The marquis had been anxious that Washington should know the state of affairs in France, and the progress and prospects of the momentous cause in which he was engaged, but, in the hurry of occupation, had not time to write with the necessary detail; finding, however, that Trumbull was soon to depart for the United States, he invited him to breakfast with him at an early hour and alone, for the express purpose of explaining matters to him frankly and fully, to be communicated by him to Washington, immediately on his arrival in America.

We give the colonel's report of Lafayette's conversation, as he has recorded it in his autobiography.

"You have witnessed the surface of things," said the marquis; "it is for me to explain the interior. The object which is aimed at by the Duke de Rochefoucauld, M. Condorcet, myself, and some others, who consider ourselves leaders, is to obtain from France a constitution nearly resembling that of England, which we regard as the most perfect model of government

hitherto known. To accomplish this, it is necessary to diminish, very essentially, the power of the king; but our object is to retain the throne, in great majesty, as the first branch of the legislative power, but retrenching its executive power in one point, which, though very important in the British crown, we think is needless here. The peerage of France is already so numerous, that we would take from our king the right of creating new peers, except in cases where old families may become extinct. To all this, the king (who is one of the best men, and sincerely desirous of the happiness of his people) most freely and cordially consents.

"We wish a House of Peers with powers of legislation similar to that of England, restricted in number to one hundred members, to be elected by the whole body from among themselves, in the same manner as the Scotch peers are in the British Parliament. . . . We wish, as the third branch of the legislative body, a House of Representatives, chosen by the great body of the people from among themselves, by such a ratio as shall not make the House too numerous; and this branch of our project meets unanimous applause. . . . Unhappily, there is one powerful and wicked man, who, I fear, will destroy this beautiful

fabric of human happiness—the Duke of Orleans. He does not, indeed, possess talent to carry into execution a great project, but he possesses immense wealth, and France abounds in marketable talents. Every city and town has young men eminent for abilities, particularly in the law—ardent in character, eloquent, ambitious of distinction, but poor. These are the instruments which the duke may command by money, and they will do his bidding. His hatred of the royal family can be satiated only by their ruin; his ambition, probably, leads him to aspire to the throne.

"You saw the other day, in the mob, men who were called *les Marseillois*, *les patriots par excellence*. You saw them particularly active and audacious in stimulating the discontented artisans and laborers, who composed the great mass of the mob, to acts of violence and ferocity; these men are, in truth, desperadoes, assassins from the south of France, familiar with murder, robbery, and every atrocious crime, who have been brought up to Paris by the money of the duke, for the very purpose in which you saw them employed, of mingling in all mobs, and exciting the passions of the people to frenzy.

"This is the first act of the drama. The second will be to influence the elections, to fill

the approaching Assembly with ardent, inexperienced, desperate, ambitious young men, who, instead of proceeding to discuss calmly the details of the plan of which I have given you the general outline, and to carry it quietly into operation, will, under disguise of zeal for the people, and abhorrence of the aristocrats, drive every measure to extremity, for the purpose of throwing the affairs of the nation into utter confusion, when the master-spirit may accomplish his ultimate purpose." *

Such was the report of affairs in France which Lafayette transmitted by Trumbull to Washington. It was not long after this conversation of the colonel with the marquis that, the sittings of the National Assembly being transferred from Versailles to Paris, the Breton club fixed itself on the site of the convent of Jacobins; threw open its doors to the public, and soon, under the appellation of the JACOBIN CLUB, exercised the baleful influence in public affairs, which Lafayette apprehended.

Washington had listened with profound attention to the report rendered by Trumbull. In the course of a subsequent conversation the latter informed him that Mr. Jefferson had embarked for America, and, it was probable, had already landed at Norfolk in Virginia.

* Trumbull's *Autobiography*, 151.

Washington immediately forwarded to him his commission as Secretary of State, requesting to know his determination on the subject.

Jefferson, in reply, expressed himself flattered by the nomination, but dubious of his being equal to its extensive and various duties, while, on the other hand, he felt familiar with the duties of his present office. "But it is not for an individual to choose his path," said he. "You are to marshal us as may best be for the public good. . . . Signify to me, by another line, your ultimate wish, and I shall conform to it cordially. If it should be to remain in New York, my chief comfort will be to work under your eye; my only shelter the authority of your name and the wisdom of measures to be dictated by you and implicitly executed by me." *

Washington, in answer, informed him that he considered the successful administration of the general government an object of almost infinite consequence to the present and future happiness of the citizens of the United States; that he regarded the office of Secretary for the Department of State very important, and that he knew of no person who, in his judgment, could better execute the duties of it than himself.†

* Jefferson's *Works*, vol. iii., p. 125.

† Washington's *Writings*, x., 79.

Jefferson accordingly accepted the nomination, but observed that the matters which had called him home, would probably prevent his setting out for New York before the month of March.

Chapter XIV.

Reassembling of Congress—Financial Condition of the Country—Its Debt at Home and Abroad—Debts of the States—Hamilton's Report—Opposition to it—Dr. Stuart's Warning Letter to Washington—His Reply—Jefferson's Arrival at the Seat of Government—New York at that Period—Jefferson Apprehends Monarchical Designs.

CONGRESS reassembled on the 4th of January (1790), but a quorum of the two Houses was not present until the 8th, when the session was opened by Washington in form, with an address delivered before them in the Senate chamber.*

* As the degree of state with which the session was opened was subsequently a matter of comment, we extract from Washington's diary his own account of it, premising that the regulations were devised by General Knox and Colonel Humphreys.

"Friday 8th, according to appointment, at 11 o'clock, I set out for the City Hall in my coach, preceded by Colonel Humphreys and Major Jackson in

Among the most important objects suggested in the address, for the deliberation of Congress were provisions for national defense; provisions for facilitating intercourse with foreign nations, and defraying the expenses of diplomatic agents; laws for the naturalization of foreigners; uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures of the United States; facilities for the advancement of commerce, agriculture, and manufactures; attention to the post-office and

uniform (on my two white horses), and followed by Messrs. Lear and Nelson in my chariot, and Mr. Lewis, on horseback, following them. In their rear was the Chief Justice of the United States and Secretaries of the Treasury and War Departments in their respective carriages, and in the order they are named. At the outer door of the Hall, I was met by the doorkeepers of the Senate and House and conducted to the door of the Senate chamber, and passing from thence to the chair through the Senate on the right and House of Representatives on the left, I took my seat. The gentlemen who attended me followed and took their stands behind the senators; the whole rising as I entered. After being seated, at which time the members of both Houses also sat, I rose (as they also did), and made my speech, delivering one copy to the President of the Senate and another to the Speaker of the House of Representatives—after which, and being a few moments seated, I retired, bowing on each side to the assembly(who stood) as I passed, and descending, to the lower hall attended as before, I returned with them to my house."

post-roads; measures for the promotion of science and literature, and for the support of public credit.

This last object was the one which Washington had more immediately at heart. The government was now organized, apparently to the satisfaction of all parties; but its efficiency would essentially depend on the success of a measure which Washington had pledged himself to institute, and which was yet to be tried; namely, a system of finance adapted to revive the national credit, and place the public debt in a condition to be paid off. The credit of the country was at a low ebb. The confederacy, by its articles, had the power of contracting debts for a national object, but no control over the means of payment. Thirteen independent legislatures could grant or withhold the means. The government was then a government under governments—the States had more power than Congress. At the close of the war the debt amounted to forty-two millions of dollars; but so little had the country been able to fulfil its engagements, owing to the want of a sovereign legislature having the sole and exclusive power of laying duties upon imports, and thus providing adequate resources, that the debt had swollen, through arrears of interest, to upwards of fifty-four millions. Of this amount nearly

eight millions were due to France, between three and four millions to private lenders in Holland, and about two hundred and fifty thousand in Spain; making, altogether, nearly twelve millions due abroad. The debt contracted at home amounted to upwards of forty-two millions, and was due, originally, to officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary War, who had risked their lives for the cause; farmers who had furnished supplies for the public service, or whose property had been assumed for it; capitalists who, in critical periods of the war, had adventured their fortunes in support of their country's independence. The domestic debt, therefore, could not have had a more sacred and patriotic origin; but, in the long delay of national justice, the paper which represented these outstanding claims, had sunk to less than a sixth of its nominal value, and the larger portion of it had been parted with at that depreciated rate, either in the course of trade, or to speculative purchasers, who were willing to take the risk of eventual payment, however little their confidence seemed to be warranted, at the time, by the pecuniary condition and prospects of the country.

The debt, when thus transferred, lost its commanding appeal to patriotic sympathy; but remained as obligatory in the eye of justice.

In the public newspapers, however, and in private circles, the propriety of a discrimination between the assignees and the original holders of the public securities, was freely discussed. Beside the foreign and domestic debt of the Federal government, the States, individually, were involved in liabilities contracted for the common cause, to an aggregate amount of about twenty-five millions of dollars; of which more than one half was due from three of them; Massachusetts and South Carolina each owing more than five millions, and Virginia more than three and a half. The reputation and the well-being of the government were, therefore, at stake upon the issue of some plan to retrieve the national credit, and establish it upon a firm and secure foundation.

The Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Hamilton), it will be remembered, had been directed by Congress, to prepare such a plan during its recess. In the one thus prepared, he asserted, what none were disposed to question, the propriety of paying the foreign debt according to its terms. He asserted, also, the equal validity of the original claims of the American creditors of the government; whether those creditors were the original holders of its certificates or subsequent purchasers of them at a depreciated value. The idea of any distinction between

them, which some were inclined to advance, he repudiated as alike unjust, impolitic, and impracticable. He urged, moreover, the assumption, by the general government, of the separate debts of the States, contracted for the common cause, and that a like provision should be made for their payment as for the payment of those of the Union. They were all contracted in the struggle for national independence, not for the independence of any particular part. No more money would be required for their discharge as Federal, than as State debts. Money could be raised more readily by the Federal government than by the States, and all clashing and jealousy between State and Federal debtors would thus be prevented. A reason, also, which, no doubt, had great weight with him, though he did not bring it under consideration in his report for fear, probably, of offending the jealousy of State sovereignty, dormant, but not extinct, was, that it would tend to unite the States financially, as they were united politically, and strengthen the central government by rallying capitalists around it; subjecting them to its influence, and rendering them agents of its will. He recommended, therefore, that the entire mass of debt be funded; the Union made responsible for it, and taxes imposed for its liquidation. He suggested,

moreover, the expediency, for the greater security of the debt and punctuality in the payment of interest, that the domestic creditors submit to an abatement of accruing interest.

The plan was reported to the House by Mr. Hamilton, the 14th of January, but did not undergo consideration until the 8th of February, when it was opposed with great earnestness, especially the point of assuming the State debts, as tending to consolidation, as giving an undue influence to the general government, and as being of doubtful constitutionality. This financial union of the States was reprobated, not only on the floor of Congress, but in different parts of the Union, as fraught with political evil. The Northern and Eastern States generally favored the plan, as did also South Carolina, but Virginia manifested a determined opposition. The measure, however, passed, in Committee of the Whole, on the 9th of March, by a vote of thirty-one to twenty-six.

The funding of the State debts was supposed to benefit, materially, the Northern States, in which was the entire capital of the country; yet South Carolina voted for the assumption. The fact is, opinions were honestly divided on the subject. The great majority were aiming to do their duty—to do what was right; but their disagreement was the result of real diffi-

culties incident to the intricate and complicated problem with which they had to deal.

A letter from Washington's monitory friend, Dr. Stuart of Virginia (dated March 15th), spoke with alarm of the jealous belief growing up in that quarter, that the Northern and Eastern States were combining to pursue their own exclusive interests. Many, he observed, who had heretofore been warm supporters of the government, were changing their sentiments, from a conviction of the impracticability of union with States whose interests were so dissimilar.

Washington had little sympathy with these sectional jealousies; and the noble language in which he rebukes them cannot be too largely cited. "I am sorry," observes he, "such jealousies as you speak of, should be gaining ground and poisoning the minds of the Southern people; but, admit the fact which is alleged as the cause of them, and give it full scope, does it amount to more than was known to every man of information before, at, and since the adoption of the Constitution? Was it not always believed that there are some points which peculiarly interest the Eastern States? And did any one who reads human nature, and more especially the character of the eastern people, conceive that they would not pursue

them steadily, by a combination of their force? Are there not other points which equally concern the Southern States? If these States are less tenacious of their interest, or if, while the Eastern move in a solid phalanx to effect their views, the Southern are always divided, which of the two is most to be blamed? That there is a diversity of interests in the Union, none has denied. That this is the case, also, in every State, is equally certain; and that it even extends to the counties of individual States, can be as readily proved. Instance the southern and northern parts of Virginia, the upper and lower parts of South Carolina. Have not the interests of these always been at variance? Witness the county of Fairfax. Have not the interests of the people of that county varied, or the inhabitants been taught to believe so? These are well-known truths, and yet it did not follow that separation was to result from the disagreement.

"To constitute a dispute, there must be two parties. To understand it well, both parties, and all the circumstances, must be fully heard; and, to accommodate differences, temper and mutual forbearance are requisite. Common danger brought the States into confederacy, and on their union our safety and importance depend. A spirit of accommodation was the

basis of the present Constitution. Can it be expected, then, that the southern or eastern parts of the empire will succeed in all their measures? Certainly not. But I will readily grant that more points will be carried by the latter than the former, and for the reason which has been mentioned; namely, that in all great national questions, they move in unison, whilst the others are divided. But I ask again, which is most blameworthy, those who see and will steadily pursue their interest, or those who cannot see, or seeing, will not act wisely? And I will ask another question, of the highest magnitude in my mind, to wit, if the Eastern and Northern States are dangerous in *union*, will they be less so in *separation?* If self-interest is their governing principle, will it forsake them, or be restrained by such an event? I hardly think it would. Then, independently of other considerations, what would Virginia, and such other States as might be inclined to join her, gain by a separation? Would they not, most unquestionably, be the weaker party?"

At this juncture (March 21st), when Virginia discontents were daily gaining strength, Mr. Jefferson arrived in New York to undertake the duties of the Department of State. We have shown his strong antipathies, while in Paris, to everything of a monarchical or aristo-

cratical tendency; he had just been in Virginia, where the forms and ceremonials adopted at the seat of our government were subjects of cavil and sneer; where it was reported that Washington affected a monarchical style in his official intercourse, that he held court-like levees, and Mrs. Washington "queenly drawing-rooms," at which none but the aristocracy were admitted; that the manners of both were haughty, and their personal habits reserved and exclusive.

The impressions thus made on Jefferson's mind, received a deeper stamp on his arrival in New York, from conversations with his friend Madison, in the course of which the latter observed, that "the satellites and sycophants which surrounded Washington, had wound up the ceremonials of the government to a pitch of stateliness which nothing but his personal character could have supported, and which no character after him could ever maintain."

Thus prepossessed and premonished, Jefferson looked round him with an apprehensive eye, and appears to have seen something to startle him at every turn. We give, from his private correspondence, his own account of his impressions. "Being fresh from the French revolution, while in its first and pure stage,

and, consequently, somewhat whetted up in my own republican principles, I found a state of things in the general society of the place, which I could not have supposed possible. The revolution I had left, and that we had just gone through in the recent change of our own government, being the common topics of conversation, I was astonished to find the general prevalence of monarchical sentiments, insomuch, that in maintaining those of republicanism, I had always the whole company on my hands, never scarcely finding among them a single co-advocate in that argument, unless some old member of Congress happened to be present. The furthest that any one would go in support of the republican features of our new government, would be to say, 'The present Constitution is well as a beginning, and may be allowed a fair trial, but it is, in fact, only a stepping-stone to something better.' "

This picture, given under excitement and with preconceived notions, is probably overcharged; but, allowing it to be true, we can hardly wonder at it, viewed in connection with the place and times. New York, during the session of Congress, was the gathering place of politicians of every party. The revolution of France had made the forms of government once more the universal topics of conversation,

and revived the conflict of opinions on the subject. As yet, the history of the world had furnished no favorable examples of popular government; speculative writers in England had contended that no government more popular than their own was consistent with either internal tranquillity, the supremacy of the laws, or a great extent of empire. Our republic was ten times larger than any that had yet existed. Jay, one of the calmest thinkers of the Union, expressed himself dubiously on the subject.

"Whether any people could long govern themselves in an equal, uniform, and orderly manner, was a question of vital importance, to the cause of liberty, but a question which, like others, whose solution depends on facts, could only be determined by experience—now, as yet, there had been very few opportunities of making the experiment."

Alexander Hamilton, though pledged and sincerely disposed to support the republican form, with regard to our country, preferred, *theoretically*, a monarchical form; and, being frank of speech, and, as Gouverneur Morris writes, "prone to mount his hobby," may have spoken openly in favor of that form as suitable to France; and as his admirers took their creed from him, opinions of the kind may have been

uttered pretty freely at dinner-tables. These, however, which so much surprised and shocked Mr. Jefferson, were probably merely speculative opinions, broached in unguarded hours, with no sinister design, by men who had no thought of paving the way for a monarchy. They made, however, a deep impression on his apprehensive mind, which sank deeper and deeper until it became a fixed opinion with him, that there was the desire and aim of a large party, of which Hamilton was the leader, to give regal form to the government.

Chapter XV.

The Assumption of the State Debts Discussed—Washington in Favor—A Majority of Two against it—Hamilton's Appeal to Jefferson on the Subject—The Latter Arranges for a Compromise—His Account of it—Adjustment about the Seat of Government—Assumption Carried—Treaty of Peace with the Creeks—Cavillings about Presidential Etiquette—Washington's Defense—Adjournment of Congress—Fancied Harmony of the Cabinet—Jefferson Suspects Hamilton of Finesse in Procuring his Agency in the Assumption.

THE question of the assumption of the State debts was resumed in Congress on the 29th of March, on a motion to commit, which was carried by a majority of two; the five members from North Carolina (now a State of the Union), who were strongly opposed to assumption, having taken their seats and reversed the position of parties on the question. An angry and intemperate discussion was revived, much to the chagrin

of Washington, who was concerned for the dignity of Congress; and who considered the assumption of the State debts, under proper restrictions and scrutiny into accounts, to be just and reasonable.* On the 12th of April, when the question to commit was taken, there was a majority of two against the assumption.

On the 26th the House was discharged, for the present, from proceeding on so much of the report as related to the assumption. Jefferson, who had arrived in New York in the midst of what he terms "this bitter and angry contest," had taken no concern in it; being, as he says, "a stranger to the ground, a stranger to the actors in it, so long absent as to have lost all familiarity with the subject, and to be unaware of its object." We give his own account of an earnest effort made by Hamilton, who, he says, was "in despair," to resuscitate, through his influence, his almost hopeless project. "As I was going to the President's one day, I met him [Hamilton] in the street. He walked me backwards and forwards before the President's door for half an hour. He painted pathetically the temper into which the legislature had been wrought; the disgust of those who were called the creditor States: the danger of the *secession* of their

* See letter to David Stuart, *Writings*, x., 98.

members, and the separation of the States. He observed that the members of the administration ought to act in concert; that though this question was not in my department, yet a common duty should make it a common concern; that the President was the centre on which all administrative questions ultimately rested, and that all of us should rally around him, and support, with joint efforts, measures approved by him; and that the question having been lost by a small majority only, it was probable that an appeal from me to the judgment and discretion of some of my friends, might effect a change in the vote, and the machine of government, now suspended, might be again set in motion. I told him that I was really a stranger to the whole subject; that not having yet informed myself of the system of finance adopted, I knew not how far this was a necessary sequence; that undoubtedly, if its rejection endangered a dissolution of our Union at this incipient stage, I should deem that the most unfortunate of all consequences, to avert which all partial and temporary evils should be yielded. I proposed to him, however, to dine with me the next day, and I would invite another friend or two, bring them into conference together, and I thought it impossible that reasonable men, consulting together coolly,

could fail, by some mutual sacrifices of opinion, to form a compromise which was to save the Union. The discussion took place. I could take no part in it but an exhortatory one, because I was a stranger to the circumstances which should govern it. But it was finally agreed, that whatever importance had been attached to the rejection of this proposition, the preservation of the Union and of concord among the States was more important, and that, therefore, it would be better that the vote of rejection should be rescinded, to effect which some members should change their votes. But it was observed that this pill would be peculiarly bitter to the Southern States, and that some concomitant measure should be adopted to sweeten it a little to them. There had before been projects to fix the seat of government either at Philadelphia or at Georgetown on the Potomac; and it was thought that by giving it to Philadelphia for ten years, and to Georgetown permanently afterwards, this might, as an anodyne, calm in some degree the ferment which might be excited by the other measure alone. Some two of the Potomac members (White and Lee, but White with a revulsion of stomach almost convulsive) agreed to change their votes, and Hamilton undertook to carry the other point. In doing this, the influence

he had established over the Eastern members, with the agency of Robert Morris with those of the Middle States, effected his side of the engagement." *

The decision of Congress was ultimately in favor of assumption, though the form in which it finally passed differed somewhat from the proposition of Hamilton. A specific sum was assumed ($21,500,000), and this was distributed among the States in specific portions. Thus modified, it passed the Senate, July 22d, by the close vote of fourteen to twelve; and the House, July 24th, by thirty-four to twenty-eight, "after having," says Washington, "been agitated with a warmth and intemperance, with prolixity and threats which, it is to be feared, have lessened the dignity of Congress and decreased the respect once entertained for it."

The question about the permanent seat of government, which, from the variety of contending interests, had been equally a subject of violent contest, was now compromised. It was agreed that Congress should continue for ten years to hold its sessions at Philadelphia; during which time the public buildings should be erected at some place on the Potomac, to which the government should remove at the expira-

* Jefferson's *Works*, ix., 293, *The Annas*.

tion of the above term. A territory, ten miles square, selected for the purpose on the confines of Maryland and Virginia, was ceded by those States to the United States, and subsequently designated as the District of Columbia.

One of the last acts of the Executive during this session was the conclusion of a treaty of peace and friendship with the Creek nation of Indians, represented at New York by Mr. M'Gillivray, and thirty of the chiefs and head men. By this treaty (signed August 7th), an extensive territory, claimed by Georgia, was relinquished greatly to the discontent of that State; being considered by it an unjustifiable abandonment of its rights and interests. Jefferson, however, lauded the treaty as important, "drawing a line," said he, "between the Creeks and Georgia, and enabling the government to do, as it will do, justice against either party offending."

In a familiar conversation with the President, Jefferson remonstrated frequently and earnestly against the points and ceremonies prevailing at the seat of government. Washington, in reply, gave the explanation which we have stated in a preceding chapter; that they had been adopted at the advice of others, and that for himself he was indifferent to all forms. He soon, however, became painfully

aware of the exaggerated notions on the subject prevalent in Virginia. A letter from his friend, Dr. Stuart, informed him that Patrick Henry had scouted the idea of being elected to the Senate; he was too old, he said, to fall into the awkward imitations which were now become fashionable. "From this expression," adds Mr. Stuart, "I suspect the old patriot has heard some extraordinary representations of the etiquette established at your levees." Another person, whom Dr. Stuart designates as Colonel B—, had affirmed "that there was more pomp used there than at St. James', where he had been, and that Washington's bows were more distant and stiff."

These misapprehensions and exaggerations, prevalent in his native State, touched Washington to the quick, and called forth a more sensitive reply than on such subjects he was accustomed to make.

"That I have not been able," writes he, "to make bows to the taste of poor Colonel B— (who, by the by, I believe, never saw one of them), is to be regretted, especially, too, as, upon those occasions, they were indiscriminately bestowed, and the best I was master of. Would it not have been better to throw the veil of charity over them, ascribing their stiffness to the effects of age, or to the unskilfulness of

my teacher, rather than to pride and dignity of office, which God knows, has no charms for me? For I can truly say, I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the seat of government by the officers of state and the representatives of every power in Europe."

He then goes on to give a sketch of his levees, and the little ceremony that prevailed there. As to the visits made on those occasions to the presidential mansion, they were optional, and made without invitation. "Between the hours of three and four, every Tuesday, I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please; a porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they please, and without ceremony. At their first entrance they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting. To this, two reasons are opposed; first, it is unusual; secondly, which is a more substantial one, because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit it.

"Similar to the above, but of a more sociable kind, are the visits every Friday afternoon to

Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week, to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of state, and other communications with all parts of the Union, are as much, if not more, than I am able to undergo; for I have already had, within less than a year, two severe attacks —the last worse than the first. A third, more than probably, will put me to sleep with my fathers."

Congress adjourned on the 12th of August. Jefferson, commenting on the discord that had prevailed for a time among the members, observes, that in the latter part of the session, they had reacquired the harmony which had always distinguished their proceedings before the introduction of the two disagreeable subjects of the Assumption and the Residence: "these," said he, "really threatened, at one time, a separation of the legislature *sine die*."

"It is not foreseen," adds he, sanguinely, "that anything so generative of dissension can arise again; and, therefore, the friends of government hope that that difficulty surmounted in the States, everything will work well." *

Washington, too, however, grieved and disappointed he may have been by the dissensions

* Jefferson's *Works*, iii., 184.

which had prevailed in Congress, consoled himself by the fancied harmony of his cabinet. Singularly free himself from all jealousy of the talents and popularity of others, and solely actuated by zeal for the public good, he had sought the ablest men to assist him in his arduous task, and supposed them influenced by the same unselfish spirit. In a letter to Lafayette, he writes: "Many of your old acquaintances and friends are concerned with me in the administration of this government. By having Mr. Jefferson at the head of the department of State, Mr. Jay of the Judiciary, Hamilton of the Treasury, and Knox of War, I feel myself supported by able coadjutors who harmonize extremely well together."

Yet, at this very moment, a lurking spirit of rivalry between Jefferson and Hamilton was already existing and daily gaining strength. Jefferson, who, as we have intimated, already considered Hamilton a monarchist in his principles, regarded all his financial schemes with suspicion, as intended to strengthen the influence of the treasury and make its chief the master of every vote in the legislature, "which might give to the government the direction suited to his political views."

Under these impressions, Jefferson looked back with an angry and resentful eye, to the

manner in which Hamilton had procured his aid in effecting the measure of assumption. He now regarded it as a finesse by which he had been entrapped, and stigmatized the measure itself as a "fiscal manœuvre, to which he had most ignorantly and innocently been made to hold the candle." *

*Jefferson's *Works*, ix., 92.

Chapter XVII.

Lafayette at the Head of the Revolution in France—His Letter to Washington—Gouverneur Morris' Opinion of his Position—Washington's dubious and Anxious Views—Presented by Lafayette with the Key of the Bastile—Visits Rhode Island and Mount Vernon.

DURING these early stages of his administration the attention of Washington was often called off from affairs at home to affairs in France; and to the conspicuous and perilous part which his friend and disciple Lafayette was playing in the great revolutionary drama.

"Your friend, the Marquis de Lafayette," writes the Marquis de la Luzerne, "finds himself at the head of the revolution; and, indeed, it is a very fortunate circumstance for the state that he is, but very little so for himself. Never has any man been placed in a more critical situation. A good citizen, a faithful subject,

he is embarrassed by a thousand difficulties in making many people sensible of what is proper, who very often feel it not, and who sometimes do not understand what it is."

Lafayette, too, amid the perplexities of conducting a revolution, looked back to the time when, in his early campaigns in America, he had shared Washington's councils, bivouacked with him on the field of battle, and been benefited by his guardian wisdom in every emergency.

"How often, my well-beloved general," writes he (January, 1790), "have I regretted your sage councils and friendly support. We have advanced in the career of the revolution without the vessel of state being wrecked against the rocks of aristocracy or faction. In the midst of efforts, always renewing, of the partisans of the past and of the ambitious, we advance towards a tolerable conclusion. At present, that which existed has been destroyed; a new political edifice is forming; without being perfect, it is sufficient to assure liberty. Thus prepared, the nation will be in a state to elect, in two years, a convention which can correct the faults of the constitution. . . . The result will, I hope, be happy for my country and for humanity. One perceives the germs of liberty in other parts of

Europe. I will encourage their developement by all the means in my power."

Gouverneur Morris, who is no enthusiast of the revolution, regards its progress with a dubious eye. Lafayette, in the previous month of November, had asked his opinion of his situation. "I give it to him," writes Morris, *sans ménagement.* I tell him that the time approaches when all good men must cling to the throne. That the present king is very valuable on account of his moderation; and if he should possess too great authority, might be persuaded to grant a proper constitution. That the thing called a constitution, which the Assembly have framed, is good for nothing. That, as to himself, his personal situation is very delicate. That he nominally, but not really, commands his troops. That I really cannot understand how he is to establish discipline among them, but, unless he can accomplish that object, he must be ruined sooner or later."

On the 22d of January, 1790, Morris writes to Washington, "Our friend Lafayette burns with desire to be at the head of an army in Flanders, and drive the Stadtholder into a ditch. He acts now a splendid, but dangerous part. Unluckily, he has given in to measures as to the constitution, which he does not

heartily approve, and heartily approves many things which experience will demonstrate to be injurious." *

Far removed as Washington was from the theatre of political action, and but little acquainted with many of the minute circumstances which might influence important decisions, he was cautious in hazarding opinions in his replies to his French correspondents. Indeed, the whole revolutionary movement appeared to him so extraordinary in its commencement, so wonderful in its progress, and so stupendous in its possible consequences, that he declared himself almost lost in the contemplation of it. "Of one thing you may rest perfectly assured," writes he to the Marquis de la Luzerne, "that nobody is more anxious for the happy issue of that business than I am; as no one can wish more sincerely for the prosperity of the French nation than I do. Nor is it without the most sensible pleasure that I learn that our friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, has, in acting the arduous part which has fallen to his share, conducted himself with so much wisdom and apparently with such general satisfaction."

A letter subsequently received from Lafayette gives him two months' tidings, extend-

* *Mém. de Lafayette*, tom. ii., 446.

ing to the middle of March. "Our revolution pursues its march as happily as is possible, with a nation which, receiving at once all its liberties, is yet subject to confound them with licentiousness. The Assembly has more of hatred against the ancient system, than of experience to organize the new constitutional government; the ministers regret their ancient power, and do not dare to make use of that which they have; in short, as all which existed has been destroyed, and replaced by institutions very incomplete, there is ample matter for critiques and calumnies. Add to this, we are attacked by two sorts of enemies; the aristocrats who aim at a counter-revolution, and the factious who would annihilate all authority, perhaps even attempt the life of the members of the reigning branch. These two parties foment all the troubles.

"After having avowed all this, my dear general, I will tell you, with the same frankness, that we have made an admirable and almost incredible destruction of all the abuses, of all the prejudices; that all which was not useful to the people, all which did not come from them, has been retrenched; that, in considering the situation, topographical, moral, and political of France, we have effected more changes in ten months, than the most pre-

sumptuous patriots could have hoped, and that the reports about our anarchy, our internal troubles, are greatly exaggerated."

In concluding his letter, he writes: "Permit me, my dear general, to offer you a picture representing the Bastile, such as it was some days after I had given orders for its demolition. I make you homage, also, of the principal key of this fortress of despotism. It is a tribute which I owe you, as son to my adopted father, as aide-de-camp to my general, as missionary of liberty to its patriarch."

Thomas Paine was to have been the bearer of the key, but he forwarded it to Washington from London. "I feel myself happy," writes he, "in being the person through whom the marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of despotism, and the first ripe fruits of American principles, transplanted into Europe, to his great master and patron. That the principles of America opened the Bastile is not to be doubted, and, therefore, the key comes to the right place."

Washington received the key with reverence, as "a token of the victory gained by liberty over despotism"; and it is still preserved at Mount Vernon, as a precious historical relic.*

His affectionate solicitude for the well-being

*Sparks's *Life of Morris*, ii., 86.

of Lafayette, was somewhat relieved by the contents of his letter; but, while his regard for the French nation made him rejoice in the progress of the political reform which he considered essential to its welfare, he felt a generous solicitude for the personal safety of the youthful monarch, who had befriended America in its time of need.

"Happy am I, my good friend," writes he to the marquis, "that, amidst all the tremendous tempests which have assailed your political ship, you have had address and fortitude enough to steer her hitherto safely through the quicksands and rocks which threatened instant destruction on every side; and that your young king, in all things, seems so well disposed to conform to the wishes of the nation. In such an important, such a hazardous voyage, when everything dear and sacred is embarked, you know full well, my best wishes have never left you for a moment. Yet I will avow, that the accounts we received through the English papers, which were sometimes our only channels of information, caused our fears of failure almost to exceed our expectations of success."

Those fears were not chimerical; for, at the very time he penned this letter, the Jacobin club of Paris had already sent forth ramifications throughout France; corresponding clubs

were springing up by hundreds in the provinces, and everything was hurrying forward to a violent catastrophe.

Three days after the despatch of the last-cited letter, and two days after the adjournment of Congress, Washington, accompanied by Mr. Jefferson, departed by water on a visit to Rhode Island, which State had recently acceded to the Union. He was cordially welcomed by the inhabitants, and returned to New York, after an absence of ten days, whence he again departed for his beloved Mount Vernon, there to cast off public cares as much as possible, and enjoy the pleasures of the country during the residue of the recess of Congress.

Chapter XVII.

Frontier Difficulties with the Indians—General Harmer's Expedition against Them—Ambuscade of Colonel Hardin's Detachment—Escape of Captain Armstrong—A Second Detachment of Colonel Hardin Compelled to Retreat—Washington's Long Anxiety as to the Result of the Enterprise—Final Tidings.

FREQUENT depredations had of late been made on our frontier settlements by what Washington termed "certain banditti of Indians" from the northwest side of the Ohio. Some of our people had been massacred and others carried into deplorable captivity.

Strict justice and equity had always formed the basis of Washington's dealings with the Indian tribes, and he had endeavored to convince them that such was the general policy of our government; but his efforts were often thwarted by the conduct of our own people;

the encroachments of land speculators and the lawless conduct of our frontiersmen; and jealousies thus excited were fomented by the intrigues of foreign agents.

The Indians of the Wabash and the Miami rivers, who were the present aggressors, were numerous, warlike, and not deficient in discipline. They were well armed, also, obtaining weapons and ammunition from the posts which the British still retained within the territories of the United States, contrary to the treaty of peace.

Washington had deprecated a war with these savages, whom he considered acting under delusion; but finding all pacific overtures unavailing, and rather productive of more daring atrocities, he felt compelled to resort to it, alike by motives of policy, humanity, and justice. An act had been provided for emergencies, by which the President was empowered to call out the militia for the protection of the frontier; this act he put in force in the interval of Congress; and under it an expedition was set on foot, which began its march on the 30th of September from Fort Washington (which stood on the site of the present city of Cincinnati). Brigadier-General Harmer, a veteran of the Revolution, led the expedition, having under him three hundred and twenty regulars, with

militia detachments from Pennsylvania and Virginia (or Kentucky), making in all fourteen hundred and fifty-three men. After a march of seventeen days, they approached the principal village of the Miamis. The Indians did not wait an attack, but set fire to the village and fled to the woods. The destruction of the place, with that of large quantities of provisions, was completed.

An Indian trail being discovered, Colonel Hardin, a continental officer who commanded the Kentucky militia, was detached to follow it, at the head of one hundred and fifty of his men, and about thirty regulars, under Captain Armstrong and Ensign Hartshorn. They followed the trail for about six miles, and were crossing a plain covered by thickets, when suddenly there were volleys of rifles on each side, from unseen marksmen, accompanied by the horrid war-whoop. The trail had, in fact, decoyed them into an ambush of seven hundred savages, under the famous warrior Little Turtle. The militia fled, without firing a musket. The savages now turned upon the little handful of regulars, who stood their ground, and made a brave resistance with the bayonet until all were slain, excepting Captain Armstrong, Ensign Hartshorn, and five privates. The ensign was saved by falling behind

a log, which screened him from his pursuers. Armstrong plunged into a swamp, where he sank up to his neck, and remained for several hours of the night, within two hundred yards of the field of action, a spectator of the war-dance of the savages over the slain. The two officers who escaped thus narrowly, found their way back to the camp about six miles distant.*

The army, notwithstanding, effected the main purpose of the expedition in laying waste the Indian villages and destroying their winter's stock of provision, after which it commenced its march back to Fort Washington. On the 21st of October, when it was halted about ten miles to the west of Chillicothe, an opportunity was given Colonel Hardin to wipe out the late disgrace of his arms. He was detached with a larger body of militia than before, and sixty regulars, under Major Willys, to seek and bring the savages to action. The accounts of these Indian wars are very confused. It appears, however, that he had another encounter with Little Turtle and his braves. It was a bloody battle, fought well on both sides. The militia behaved bravely, and lost many men and officers, as did the regulars; Major Willys fell at the commencement of the action. Colonel Hardin was at length com-

* Butler's *Hist. of Kentucky*, 192.

pelled to retreat, leaving the dead and wounded in the hands of the enemy. After he had rejoined the main force, the whole expedition made its way back to Fort Washington on the banks of the Ohio.

During all this time, Washington had been rusticating at Mount Vernon, in utter ignorance of this expedition. Week after week elapsed without any tidings of its issue, progress, or even commencement. On the 2d of November he wrote to the Secretary of War (General Knox), expressing his surprise at this lack of information, and his anxiety as to the result of the enterprise, and requesting him to forward any official or other accounts that he might have relating to it.

"This matter," observed he, "favorable or otherwise in the issue, will require to be laid before Congress, that the motives which induced the expedition may appear." Nearly another month elapsed; the time for the reassembling of Congress was at hand, yet Washington was still without the desired information. It was not until the last of November that he received a letter from Governor George Clinton of New York communicating particulars of the affair related to him by Brant, the celebrated Indian chief.

"If the information of Captain Brant be

true," wrote Washington, in reply, "the issue of the expedition against the Indians will indeed prove unfortunate and disgraceful to the troops who suffered themselves to be ambuscaded."

Chapter XVIII.

Congress Reassembles at Philadelphia—Residence of Washington at the New Seat of Government—The State Carriage—Hamilton's Financial Arrangements—Impost and Excise Bill—Passage of a Bill for a National Bank—Jefferson's Objections—Formation of Two Political Parties under Hamilton and Jefferson—Their Different Views—Dissatisfaction of Congress at the Report of Harmer's Expedition—Washington's Address to the Seneca Chiefs—His Desire to Civilize the Savages—Kentucky and Vermont Admitted into the Union—First Congress Expires—A New Expedition Projected against the Hostile Tribes under General St. Clair—Washington's Solemn Warning on Taking Leave of him.

CONGRESS reassembled, according to adjournment, on the first Monday in December, at Philadelphia, which, was now, for a time, the seat of government. A house belonging to Mr. Robert Morris, the financier, had been hired by Washington for his residence, and at his request, had undergone additions and alterations "in a plain and

neat, and not by any means in an extravagant style."

His secretary, Mr. Lear, had made every preparation for his arrival and accommodation, and, among other things, had spoken of the rich and elegant style in which the state carriage was fitted up. "I had rather have heard," replied Washington, "that my repaired coach was plain and elegant than rich and elegant."

Congress at its opening, was chiefly occupied in financial arrangements, intended to establish the public credit and provide for the expenses of government. According to the statement of the Secretary of the Treasury, an additional annual revenue of eight hundred and twenty-six thousand dollars would be required, principally to meet the additional charges arising from the assumption of the State debts. He proposed to raise it by an increase of the impost on foreign distilled spirits, and a tax by way of excise on spirits distilled at home. An Impost and Excise bill was accordingly introduced into Congress, and met with violent opposition. An attempt was made to strike out the excise, but failed, and the whole bill was finally carried through the House.

Mr. Hamilton, in his former Treasury report, had recommended the establishment of a National Bank; he now, in a special report,

urged the policy of the measure. A bill, introduced in conformity with his views, was passed in the Senate, but vehemently opposed in the House; partly on considerations of policy, but chiefly on the ground of constitutionality. On one side it was denied that the Constitution had given to Congress the power of incorporation; on the other side it was insisted that such power was incident to the power vested in Congress for raising money.

The question was argued at length, and with great ardor, and after passing the House of Representatives by a majority of nineteen votes, came before the Executive for his approval. Washington was fully alive to the magnitude of the question and the interest felt in it by the opposing parties. The cabinet was divided on it. Jefferson and Randolph denied its constitutionality; Hamilton and Knox maintained it. Washington required of each minister the reasons of his opinion in writing; and, after maturely weighing them, gave his sanction to the act, and the bill was carried into effect.

The objection of Jefferson to a bank was not merely on constitutional grounds. In his subsequent writings he avows himself opposed to banks, as introducing a paper instead of a cash system—raising up a moneyed aristocracy, and

abandoning the public to the discretion of avarice and swindlers. Paper money might have some advantages, but its abuses were inevitable, and by breaking up the measure of value, it made a lottery of all private property. These objections he maintained to his dying day ; but he had others, which may have been more cogent with him in the present instance. He considered the bank as a powerful engine intended by Hamilton to complete the machinery by which the whole action of the legislature was to be placed under the direction of the Treasury, and shaped to further a monarchical system of government. Washington, he affirmed, was not aware of the drift or effect of Hamilton's schemes. "Unversed in financial projects and calculations and budgets, his approbation of them was bottomed on his confidence in the man."

Washington, however, was not prone to be swayed in his judgments by blind partiality. When he distrusted his own knowledge in regard to any important measure, he asked the written opinions of those of his council who he thought were better informed, and examined and weighed them, and put them to the test of his almost unfailing sagacity. This was the way he had acted as a general, in his military councils, and he found the same plan ef-

ficacious in his cabinet. His confidence in Hamilton's talents, information, and integrity had led him to seek his counsels; but his approbation of those counsels was bottomed on a careful investigation of them. It was the same in regard to the counsels of Jefferson; they were received with great deference, but always deliberately and scrupulously weighed. The opposite policy of these rival statesmen brought them into incessant collision. "Hamilton and myself," writes Jefferson, "were daily pitted in the cabinet like two cocks." The warm-hearted Knox always sided with his old companion in arms; whose talents he revered. He is often noticed with a disparaging sneer by Jefferson, in consequence. Randolph commonly adhered to the latter. Washington's calm and massive intellect overruled any occasional discord. His policy with regard to his constitutional advisers has been happily estimated by a modern statesman: "He sought no unit cabinet, according to the set phrase of succeeding times. He asked no suppression of sentiment, no concealment of opinion; he exhibited no mean jealousy of high talent in others. He gathered around him the greatest public men of that day, and some of them to be ranked with the greatest of any day. He did not leave Jefferson and

Hamilton without the cabinet, to shake, perhaps, the whole fabric of government in their fierce wars and rivalries, but he took them within, where he himself might arbitrate their disputes as they arose, and turn to the best account for the country their suggestions as they were made." *

In the meantime two political parties were forming throughout the Union, under the adverse standards of these statesmen. Both had the good of the country at heart, but differed as to the policy by which it was to be secured. The Federalists, who looked up to Hamilton as their model, were in favor of strengthening the general government so as to give it weight and dignity abroad and efficiency at home; to guard it against the encroachments of the individual States and a general tendency to anarchy. The other party, known as Republicans or Democrats, and taking Mr. Jefferson's view of affairs, saw in all the measures advocated by the Federalists, an intention to convert the Federal into a great central or consolidated government, preparatory to a change from a republic to a monarchy.

The particulars of General Harmer's expedition against the Indians, when reported to Congress, gave great dissatisfaction. The con-

* Speech of R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia.

duct of the troops, in suffering themselves to be surprised, was for some time stigmatized as disgraceful. Further troubles in that quarter were apprehended, for the Miamis were said to be less disheartened by the ravage of their villages than exultant at the successful ambuscades of Little Turtle.

Three Seneca chiefs, Cornplanter, Half Town, and Great Tree, being at the seat of government on business of their own nation, offered to visit these belligerent tribes, and persuade them to bury the hatchet. Washington, in a set speech encouraged them in the undertaking. "By this humane measure," said he, "you will render these mistaken people a great service, and probably prevent their being swept off the face of the earth. The United States require only that these people should demean themselves peaceably. But they may be assured that the United States are able, and will most certainly punish them severely for all their robberies and murders."

Washington had always been earnest in his desire to civilize the savages, but had little faith in the expedient which had been pursued, of sending their young men to our colleges; the true means, he thought, was to introduce the arts and habits of husbandry among them. In concluding his speech to the Seneca chiefs

he observed: "When you return to your country, tell your nation that it is my desire to promote their prosperity by teaching them the use of domestic animals, and the manner that the white people plough and raise so much corn; and if, upon consideration, it would be agreeable to the nation at large to learn those arts, I will find some means of teaching them at some places within their country as shall be agreed upon."

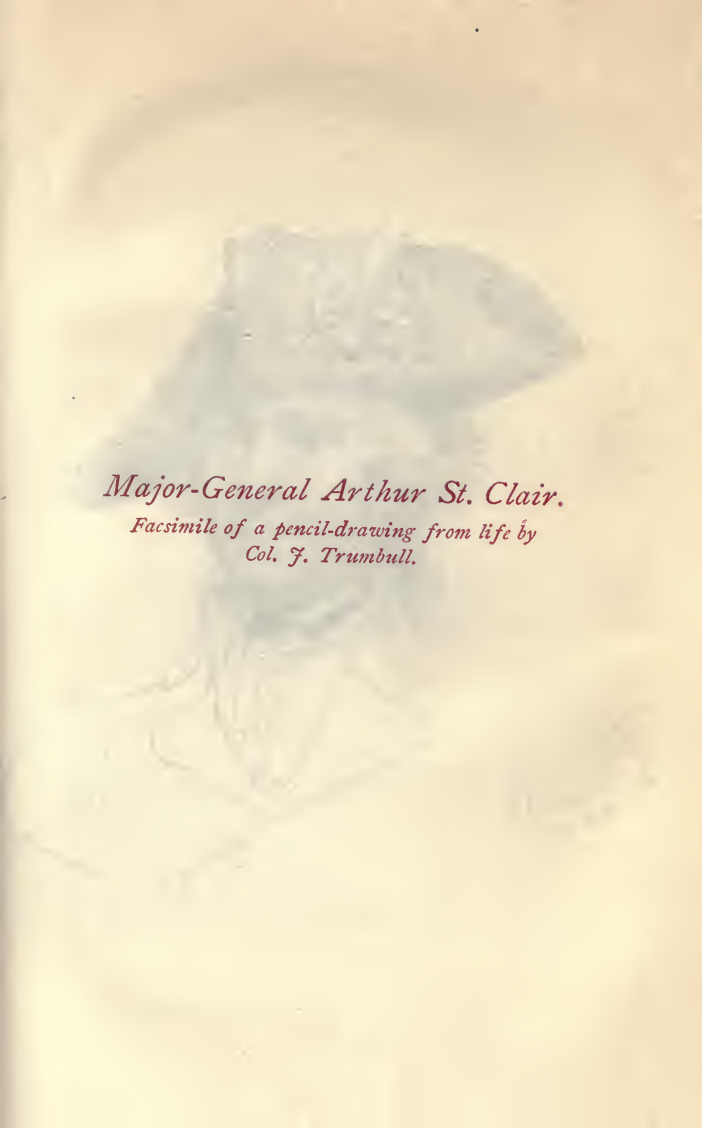
In the course of the present session, Congress received and granted the applications of Kentucky and Vermont for admission into the Union, the former after August, 1792; the latter immediately.

On the 3d of March the term of this first Congress expired. Washington, after reciting the various important measures that had been effected, testified to the great harmony and cordiality which had prevailed. In some few instances, he admitted, particularly in passing the law for higher duties on spirituous liquors, and more especially on the subject of the bank, "the line between the southern and eastern interests had appeared more strongly marked than could be wished," the former against and the latter in favor of those measures, "but the debates," adds he, "were conducted with temper and candor."

As the Indians on the northwest side of the Ohio still continued their hostilities, one of the last measures of Congress had been an act to augment the military establishments, and to place in the hands of the Executive more ample means for the protection of the frontiers. A new expedition against the belligerent tribes had, in consequence, been projected. General St. Clair, actually governor of the territory west of the Ohio, was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces to be employed.

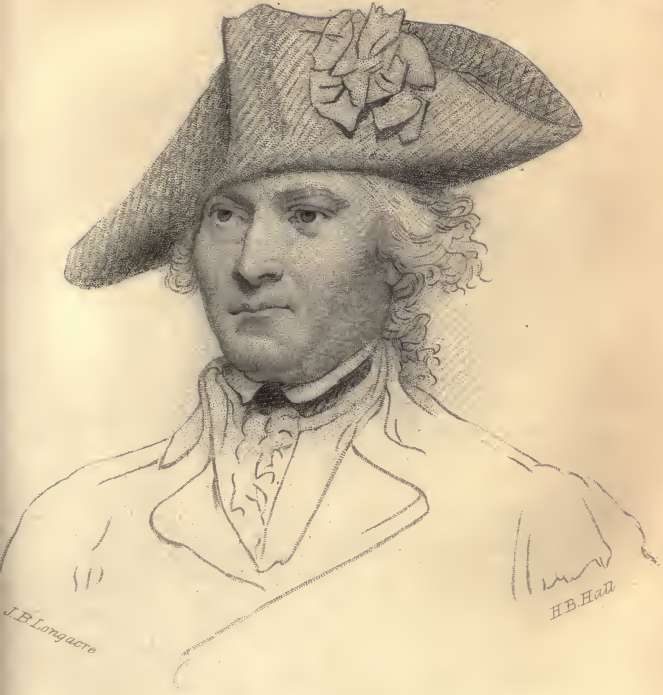
Washington had been deeply chagrined by the mortifying disasters of General Harmer's expedition to the Wabash, resulting from Indian ambushes. In taking leave of his old military comrade, St. Clair, he wished him success and honor, but gave him a solemn warning. "You have your instructions from the Secretary of War. I had a strict eye to them, and will add but one word—Beware of a surprise! You know how the Indians fight. I repeat it—*Beware of a surprise!*" With these warning words sounding in his ear, St. Clair departed.*

* Rush's *Washington in Domestic Life*, p. 67.



Major-General Arthur St. Clair.

Facsimile of a pencil-drawing from life by Col. J. Trumbull.


J.B. Longacre
H.B. Hall

Chapter XIX.

Washington's Tour through the Southern States—Letter to Lafayette—Gloomy Picture of French Affairs by Gouverneur Morris—His Allusion to Lafayette—Lafayette Depicts the Troubles of a Patriot Leader—Washington's Reply—Jefferson's Ardent Views of the French Revolution—Distrust of John Adams—His Contributions to Fenno's *Gazette*—Reprint of Paine's *Rights of Man*—Flight and Recapture of Louis XVI.—Jefferson Communicates the News to Washington—His Satisfaction when the King Accepts the Constitution.

IN the month of March, 1791, Washington set out on a tour through the Southern States; travelling with one set of horses and making occasional halts. The route projected, and of which he had marked off the halting places, was by Fredericksburg, Richmond, Wilmington (N. C.), and Charleston, to Savannah; thence to Augusta, Columbia, and the interior towns of North Carolina and Virginia, comprising a journey of eighteen

hundred and eighty-seven miles; all which he accomplished without any interruption from sickness, bad weather, or any untoward accident. "Indeed," writes he, "so highly were we favored that we arrived at each place where I proposed to make any halt, on the very day I fixed upon before we set out. The same horses performed the whole tour; and, although much reduced in flesh, kept up their full spirits to the last day."

He returned to Philadelphia on the 6th of July, much pleased with his tour. It had enabled him, he said, to see, with his own eyes, the situation of the country, and to learn more accurately the disposition of the people, than he could have done from any verbal information. He had looked around him, in fact, with a paternal eye, been cheered as usual by continual demonstrations of a nation's love, and his heart had warmed with the reflection how much of this national happiness had been won by his own patriotic exertions.

"Every day's experience of the government of the United States," writes he to David Humphreys, "seems to confirm its establishment, and to render it more popular. A ready acquiescence in the laws made under it shows, in a strong light, the confidence which the people have in their representatives, and in the

upright views of those who administer the government. At the time of passing a law imposing a duty on home-made spirits, it was vehemently affirmed by many that such a law could never be executed in the Southern States, particularly in Virginia and South Carolina. . . . But from the best information I could get on my journey respecting its operations on the minds of the people,—and I took some pains to obtain information on this point,—there remains not a doubt but it will be carried into effect, not only without opposition, but with very general approbation, in those very parts where it was foretold that it never would be submitted to by any one."

"Our public credit," adds he, "stands on that ground, which, three years ago, it would have been madness to have foretold. The astonishing rapidity with which the newly instituted bank was filled, gives an unexampled proof of the resources of our countrymen and their confidence in public measures. On the first day of opening the subscription the whole number of shares (twenty thousand) were taken up in one hour, and application made for upwards of four thousand shares more than were granted by the institution, besides many others that were coming in from various quarters." *

* *Writings*, x., 171.

To his comrade in arms, Lafayette, he also writes exultingly of the flourishing state of the country and the attachment of all classes to the government:

"While in Europe, wars or commotions seem to agitate almost every nation, peace and tranquillity prevail among us, except in some parts of our Western frontiers, where the Indians have been troublesome, to reclaim or chastise whom, proper measures are now pursuing. This contrast between the situation of the people of the United States and those of Europe, is too striking to be passed over, even by the most superficial observer, and may, I believe, be considered as one great cause of leading the people here to reflect more attentively on their own prosperous state, and to examine more minutely, and consequently approve more fully of the government under which they live, than they otherwise would have done. But we do not wish to be the only people who may taste the sweets of an equal and good government. We look with an anxious eye to the time when happiness and tranquillity shall prevail in your country, and when all Europe shall be freed from commotion, tumults, and alarms."

Letters from Gouverneur Morris had given him a gloomy picture of French affairs. "This

unhappy country," writes he, "bewildered in pursuit of metaphysical whimsies, presents to our moral view a mighty ruin. Like the remnants of ancient magnificence, we admire the architecture of the temple, while we detest the false god to whom it was dedicated. Daws and ravens, and the birds of night, now build their nests in its niches. The sovereign, humbled to the level of a beggar's pity, without resources, without authority, without a friend. The Assembly at once a master and a slave, new in power, wild in theory, raw in practice. It engrosses all functions, though incapable of exercising any, and has taken from this fierce, ferocious people, every restraint of religion and of respect. . . . Lafayette has hitherto acted a splendid part. The king obeys but detests him. He obeys because he fears. Whoever possesses the royal person may do whatever he pleases with the royal character and authority. Hence, it happens that the ministers are of Lafayette's appointment." *

Lafayette's own letters depict the troubles of a patriot leader in the stormy time of a revolution, a leader warm, generous, honest, impulsive, but not far-seeing. "I continue to be forever tossed about on an ocean of factions

* Sparks's *Life of G. Morris*, ii., 171–179.

and commotions of every kind; for it is my fate to be attacked with equal animosity; on one side, by all that is aristocratic, servile, parliamentary, in a word, by all the adversaries of my free and levelling doctrine; on the other, by the Orleans and anti-monarchical factions, and all the workers of disorder and pillage. If it is doubtful whether I may escape personally from so many enemies, the success of our grand and good revolution is, at least, thank heaven, assured in France, and soon it will propagate itself in the rest of the world, if we succeed in establishing public order in this country. Unfortunately, the people have much better learnt how to overturn despotism, than to comprehend the duty of submission to law. It is to you, my dear general, the patriarch and generalissimo of the promoters of universal liberty, that I ought always to render a faithful account of the conduct of your aide-de-camp in the service of this grand cause."

And in a subsequent letter: "I would that I could give you the assurance that our troubles were terminated and our constitution established. Nevertheless, though our horizon is still very dark, we commence to foresee the moment when a new legislative body will replace this Assembly; and, unless there come an intervention of foreign powers, I hope that

four months from this your friend will have resumed the life of a peaceful and simple citizen.

"The rage of party, even between the different shades of patriots, has gone as far as possible without the effusion of blood; but if animosities are far from subsiding, present circumstances are somewhat less menacing of a collision between the different supporters of the popular cause. As to myself, I am always the butt for attacks of all parties, because they see in my person an insurmountable obstacle to their evil designs. In the meantime, what appears to me a species of phenomenon, my popularity hitherto has not been shaken."

And in another letter, he speaks of the multiplying dangers which menaced the progress of reform in France: "The refugees hovering about the frontiers, intrigues in most of the despotic and aristocratic cabinets, our regular army divided into tory officers and undisciplined soldiers, licentiousness among the people not easily repressed, the capital, that gives the tone to the empire, tossed about by anti-revolutionary or factious parties, the Assembly fatigued by hard labor, and very unmanageable. However, according to the popular motto, *ça ira*, it will do."

When Lafayette thus wrote, faction was

predominant at Paris. Liberty and equality began to be the watchwords, and the Jacobin club had set up a journal, which was spreading the spirit of revolt and preparing the fate of royalty.

"I assure you," writes Washington, "I have often contemplated, with great anxiety, the danger to which you are personally exposed by your peculiar and delicate situation in the tumult of the time, and your letters are far from quieting that friendly concern. But to one who engages in hazardous enterprises for the good of his country, and who is guided by pure and upright views, as I am sure is the case with you, life is but a secondary consideration.

"The tumultuous populace of large cities are ever to be dreaded. Their indiscriminate violence prostrates, for the time, all public authority, and its consequences are sometimes extensive and terrible. In Paris, we may suppose these tumults are peculiarly disastrous at this time, when the public mind is in a ferment, and when, as is always the case on such occasions, there are not wanting wicked and designing men whose element is confusion, and who will not hesitate in destroying the public tranquillity to gain a favorite point."

Sympathy with the popular cause prevailed

with a part of Washington's cabinet. Jefferson was ardent in his wishes that the revolution might be established. He felt, he said, that the permanence of our own revolution leaned, in some degree, on that of France; that a failure there would be a powerful argument to prove there must be a failure here, and that the success of the French revolution was necessary to stay up our own and "prevent its falling back to that kind of half-way house, the English constitution."

Outside of the cabinet, the Vice-President, John Adams, regarded the French revolution with strong distrust. His official position, however, was too negative in its nature to afford him an opportunity of exerting influence on public affairs. He considered the post of Vice-President beneath his talents. "My country," writes he, "has, in its wisdom, contrived for me the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived." * Impatient of a situation in which, as he said, he could do neither good nor evil, he resorted, for mental relief, to the press, and for upwards of a year had exercised his fertile and ever-ready pen, in furnishing Fenno's *Gazette of the United States* with a series of papers entitled *Discourses on Davila*,

* *Life*, i., 460.

being an analysis of Davila's *History of the Civil Wars of France in the 16th Century*. The aim of Mr. Adams, in this series, was to point out to his countrymen the dangers to be apprehended from powerful factions in ill-balanced forms of government; but his aim was mistaken, and he was charged with advocating monarchy, and laboring to prepare the way for an hereditary presidency. To counteract these "political heresies," a reprint of Paine's *Rights of Man*, written in reply to Burke's pamphlet on the French revolution, appeared under the auspices of Mr. Jefferson.

While the public mind was thus agitated with conflicting opinions, news arrived in August, of the flight of Louis XVI. from Paris, and his recapture at Varennes. All Jefferson's hatred of royalty was aroused by this breach of royal faith. "Such are the fruits of that form of government," said he, scornfully, "which heaps importance on idiots, and which the tories of the present day are trying to preach into our favor. It would be unfortunate were it in the power of any one man to defeat the issue of so beautiful a revolution. I hope and trust that it is not, and that, for the good of suffering humanity all over the earth, that revolution will be established and spread all over the world."

He was the first to communicate the intelligence to Washington, who was holding one of his levees, and observes: "I never saw him so much dejected by any event in my life." Washington, himself, declares that he remained for some time in painful suspense, as to what would be the consequences of this event. Ultimately, when news arrived that the king had accepted the constitution from the hands of the National Assembly, he hailed the event as promising happy consequences to France, and to mankind in general; and what added to his joy, was the noble and disinterested part which his friend, Lafayette, had acted in this great drama. "The prayers and wishes of the human race," writes he to the marquis, "have attended the exertions of your nation; and when your affairs are settled under an energetic and equal government, the hearts of all good men will be satisfied."

Chapter XX.

Rural Hours at Mount Vernon—Assembling of Second Congress—Washington's Opening Speech—Two Expeditions Organized against the Indians, under Scott and Wilkinson—Their Feeble Result—Third Expedition under St. Clair—His Disastrous Contest and Dismal Retreat—How Washington Received the Intelligence.

A FEW weeks of autumn were passed by Washington at Mount Vernon, with his family in rural enjoyment, and in instructing a new agent, Mr. Robert Lewis, in the management of his estate; his nephew, Major George A. Washington, who ordinarily attended to his landed concerns, being absent among the mountains in quest of health.

The second Congress assembled at Philadelphia on the 24th of October, and on the 25th Washington delivered his opening speech. After remarking upon the prosperous situation

of the country, and the success which had attended its financial measures, he adverted to the offensive operations against the Indians, which government had been compelled to adopt for the protection of the Western frontier. Some of these operations, he observed, had been successful, others were still depending. A brief statement will be sufficient for the successful operations alluded to. To reconcile some of the people of the West to the appointment of General St. Clair as commander-in-chief in that quarter, a local board of war had been formed for the Western country, empowered to act in conjunction with the commanding officer of the United States, in calling out the militia, sending out expeditions against the Indians, and apportioning scouts through the exposed parts of the district of Kentucky.

Under this arrangement two expeditions had been organized in Kentucky against the villages on the Wabash. The first, in May, was led by General Charles Scott, having General Wilkinson as second in command. The second, a volunteer enterprise, in August, was led by Wilkinson alone. Very little good was effected, or glory gained by either of these expeditions. Indian villages and wigwams were burned, and fields laid waste ; some few warriors were killed

and prisoners taken, and an immense expense incurred.

Of the events of a third enterprise, led by General St. Clair himself, no tidings had been received at the time of Washington's opening speech; but we will anticipate the official despatches, and proceed to show how it fared with that veteran soldier, and how far he profited by the impressive warning which he had received from the President at parting.

The troops for his expedition assembled early in September, in the vicinity of Fort Washington (now Cincinnati). There were about two thousand regulars, and one thousand militia. The regulars included a corps of artillery and several squadrons of horse. An arduous task was before them. Roads were to be opened through a wilderness; bridges constructed for the conveyance of artillery and stores, and forts to be built so as to keep up a line of communication between the Wabash and the Ohio, the base of operations. The troops commenced their march directly north, on the 6th or 7th of September, cutting their way through the woods, and slowly constructing the line of forts. The little army, on the 24th of October, according to the diary of an officer, was respectable in numbers—"upon paper"—but, adds he, "the absence of the

first regiment, and desertions from the militia, had very much reduced us. With the residue there was too generally wanting the essential stamina of soldiers. Picked up and recruited from the offscourings of large towns and cities, enervated by idleness, debauchery, and every species of vice, it was impossible they could have been made competent to the arduous duties of Indian warfare. An extraordinary aversion to service was also conspicuous amongst them, and demonstrated by repeated desertions; in many instances to the very foe we were to combat. The late period at which they had been brought into the field, left no leisure nor opportunity to discipline them. They were, moreover, badly clothed, badly paid, and badly fed. . . . The military stores and arms were sent on in infamous order. Notwithstanding pointed orders against firing, and a penalty of one hundred lashes, game was so plenty and presented such a strong temptation, that the militia and the levies were constantly offending, to the great injury of the service and the destruction of all order in the army." *

After placing garrisons in the forts, the general continued his march. It was a forced one

* Diary of Colonel Winthrop Sargent, Adjutant-General of the U. S. army during the campaign of 1791.

with him, for he was so afflicted with the gout that he could not walk, and had to be helped on and off of his horse; but his only chance to keep his little army together was to move on. A number of the Virginia troops had already, on the 27th of October, insisted on their discharges; there was danger that the whole battalion would follow their example, and the time of the other battalions was nearly up. The plan of the general was to push so far into the enemy's country, that such detachments as might be entitled to their discharges, would be afraid to return.

The army had proceeded six days after leaving Fort Jefferson, and were drawing near a part of the country where they were likely to meet with Indians, when, on the 30th of October, sixty of the militia deserted in a body; intending to supply themselves by plundering the convoys of provisions which were coming forward in the rear. The first United States regiment, under Major Hamtranck, was detached to march back beyond Fort Jefferson, apprehend these deserters, if possible, and, at all events, prevent the provisions that might be on the way, from being rifled. The force thus detached, consisted of three hundred of the best disciplined men in the service, with experienced officers.

Thus reduced to 1,400 effective rank and file, the army continued its march to a point about twenty-nine miles from Fort Jefferson, and ninety-seven from Fort Washington, and fifteen miles south of the Miami villages, where it encamped, November 3d, on a rising ground with a stream forty feet wide in front, running westerly. This stream was mistaken by General St. Clair for the St. Mary, which empties itself into the Miami of the lakes; but it was, in fact, a tributary of the Wabash.

A number of new and old Indian camps showed that this had been a place of general resort; and in the bends of the stream were tracks of a party of fifteen, horse and foot; a scouting party most probably, which must have quitted the ground just before the arrival of the army.

The troops were encamped in two lines, the right wing composed of Butler, Clarke, and Patterson's battalions, commanded by Major-General Butler, forming the first line; Patterson on the right, and four pieces of artillery on the right of Butler. The left wing, consisting of Beddinger and Gaither's battalions, and the second United States regiment commanded by Colonel Darke, formed the second line; with an interval of about seventy yards, which was all that the ground allowed. The

length of the lines was nearly four hundred yards; the rear somewhat more, and the front somewhat less. A troop of horse, commanded by Captain Truman, and a company of riflemen under Captain Faulkner, were upon the right flank, and Snowden's troop of horse on the left.

The ground descended gradually in front of the encampment to the stream, which, at this time, was fordable, and meandered in its course; in some places, one hundred yards distant from the camp, in others not more than twenty-five. The immediate spot of the encampment was very defensible against regular troops; but it was surrounded by close woods, dense thickets, and the trunks of fallen trees, with here and there a ravine, and a small swamp—all the best kind of cover for stealthy Indian warfare.

The militia were encamped beyond the stream about a quarter of a mile in the advance, on a high flat; a much more favorable position than that occupied by the main body; and capacious enough to have accommodated the whole, and admitted any extent of lines.

It was the intention of St. Clair to throw up a slight work on the following day, and to move on to the attack of the Indian villages as soon as he should be rejoined by Major

Hamtranck and the first United States regiment. The plan of this work he concerted in the evening with Major Ferguson of the artillery, a cool, indefatigable, determined man. In the meantime, Colonel Oldham, the commanding officer of the militia, was directed to send out two detachments that evening, to explore the country and gain information concerning the enemy. The militia, however, showed signs of insubordination. They complained of being too much fatigued for the purpose; in short, the service was not, and probably could not be enforced. Sentinels posted around the camp, about fifty paces distant from each other, formed the principal security.

About half an hour before sunrise on the next morning (November 4th), and just after the troops had been dismissed on parade, a horrible sound burst forth from the woods around the militia camp, resembling, says an officer, the jangling of an infinitude of horse-bells. It was the direful Indian yell, followed by the sharp reports of the deadly rifle. The militia returned a feeble fire and then took to flight, dashing helter-skelter into the other camp. The first line of the continental troops, which was hastily forming, was thrown into disorder. The Indians were close upon the

heels of the flying militia, and would have entered the camp with them, but the sight of troops drawn up with fixed bayonets to receive them, checked their ardor, and they threw themselves behind logs and bushes at the distance of seventy yards; and immediately commenced an attack upon the first line, which soon was extended to the second. The great weight of the attack was upon the centre of each line where the artillery was placed. The artillery, if not well served, was bravely fought; a quantity of canister and some round shot were thrown in the direction whence the Indians fired; but, concealed as they were, and only seen occasionally as they sprang from one covert to another, it was impossible to direct the pieces to advantage. The artillerists themselves were exposed to a murderous fire, and every officer, and more than two thirds of the men, were killed and wounded. Twice the Indians pushed into the camp, delivering their fire and then rushing on with the tomahawk, but each time they were driven back. General Butler had been shot from his horse, and was sitting down to have his wound dressed, when a daring savage darted into camp, tomahawked and scalped him. He failed to carry off his trophy, being instantly slain.

The veteran St. Clair, who, unable to mount his horse, was borne about on a litter, preserved his coolness in the midst of the peril and disaster, giving his orders with judgment and self-possession. Seeing to what disadvantage his troops fought with a concealed enemy, he ordered Colonel Darke, with his regiment of regulars, to rouse the Indians from their covert with the bayonet, and turn their left flank. This was executed with great spirit: the enemy were driven three or four hundred yards; but, for want of cavalry or riflemen, the pursuit slackened, and the troops were forced to give back in turn. The savages had now got into the camp by the left flank; again several charges were made, but in vain. Great carnage was suffered from the enemy concealed in the woods; every shot seemed to take effect; all the officers of the second regiment were picked off, excepting three. The contest had now endured for more than two hours and a half. The spirits of the troops flagged under the loss of the officers; half the army was killed, and the situation of the remainder was desperate. There appeared to be no alternative but a retreat.

At half-past nine, General St. Clair ordered Colonel Darke, with the second regiment, to make another charge, as if to turn the right

wing of the enemy, but, in fact, to regain the road from which the army was cut off. This object was effected. "Having collected in one body the greatest part of the troops," writes one of the officers, "and such of the wounded as could possibly hobble along with us, we pushed out from the left of the rear line, sacrificing our artillery and baggage." Some of the wounded officers were brought off on horses, but several of the disabled men had to be left on the ground. The poor fellows charged their pieces before they were left: and the firing of musketry heard by the troops after they quitted the camp, told that their unfortunate comrades were selling their lives dear.

It was a disorderly flight. The troops threw away arms, ammunition, and accoutrements; even the officers, in some instances, divested themselves of their fusees. The general was mounted on a pack horse which could not be pricked out of a walk. Fortunately, the enemy did not pursue above a mile or two, returning, most probably, to plunder the camp.

By seven in the evening, the fugitives reached Fort Jefferson, a distance of twenty-nine miles. Here they met Major Hamtranck with the first regiment; but, as this force was far from sufficient to make up for the losses of

the morning, the retreat was continued to Fort Washington, where the army arrived on the 8th at noon, shattered and broken-spirited. Many poor fellows fell behind in the retreat, and fancying the savages were upon them, left the road, and some of them were wandering several days, until nearly starved.

In this disastrous battle the whole loss of regular troops and levies amounted to five hundred and fifty killed, and two hundred wounded. Out of ninety-five commissioned officers who were on the field, thirty-one were slain and twenty-four wounded. Of the three hundred and nineteen militia, Colonel Oldham and three other officers were killed and five wounded; and of non-commissioned officers and privates, thirty-eight were killed and twenty-nine wounded. Fourteen artificers and ten pack-horsemen were also killed, and thirteen wounded. So that, according to Colonel Sargent's estimate, the whole loss amounted to six hundred and seventy-seven killed, including thirty women, and two hundred and seventy-one wounded.

Poor St. Clair's defeat has been paralleled with that of Braddock. No doubt, when he realized the terrible havoc that had been made, he thought sadly of Washington's parting words, "Beware of a surprise!"

We have a graphic account of the manner in which the intelligence of the disaster was received by Washington at Philadelphia. Towards the close of a winter's day in December, an officer in uniform dismounted in front of the President's house, and, giving the bridle to his servant, knocked at the door. He was informed by the porter that the President was at dinner and had company. The officer was not to be denied; he was on public business, he brought despatches for the President. A servant was sent to the dining-room to communicate the matter to Mr. Lear. The latter left the table and went into the hall, where the officer repeated what he had said to the porter. Mr. Lear, as secretary of the President, offered to take charge of the despatches and deliver them at the proper time. The officer replied that he was just arrived from the Western army; his orders were to deliver the despatches promptly to the President in person: but that he would wait his directions. Mr. Lear returned, and, in a whisper, communicated to the President what had passed. Washington rose from the table and went into the hall, whence he returned in a short time and resumed his seat, apologizing for his absence, but without alluding to the cause of it. One of the company, however, overheard him, as

he took his seat, mutter to himself, with an ejaculation of extreme impatience, "I knew it would be so!"

Mrs. Washington held her drawing-room that evening. The gentlemen repaired thither from the table. Washington appeared there with his usual serenity; speaking courteously to every lady, as was his custom. By ten o'clock all the company had gone; Mrs. Washington retired soon after, and Washington and his secretary alone remained.

The general walked slowly backward and forward for some minutes in silence. As yet there had been no change in his manner. Taking a seat on the sofa by the fire he told Mr. Lear to sit down; the latter had scarce time to notice that he was extremely agitated, when he broke out suddenly: "It 's all over!—St. Clair's defeated!—routed: the officers nearly all killed, the men by the wholesale; the rout complete; too shocking to think of, and a surprise into the bargain!" All this was uttered with great vehemence. Then pausing and rising from the sofa, he walked up and down the room in silence, violently agitated, but saying nothing. When near the door he stopped short; stood still for a few moments, when there was another terrible explosion of wrath.

"Yes," exclaimed he, "HERE, on this very

spot, I took leave of him; I wished him success and honor. 'You have your instructions from the Secretary of War,' said I, 'I had a strict eye to them, and will add but one word, BEWARE OF A SURPRISE! You know how the Indians fight us. I repeat it, BEWARE OF A SURPRISE.' He went off with that, my last warning, thrown into his ears. And yet! To suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hacked, butchered, tomahawked, by a surprise—the very thing I guarded him against—O God! O God!" exclaimed he, throwing up his hands, and while his very frame shook with emotion, "he's worse than a murderer! How can he answer to his country! The blood of the slain is upon him—the curse of widows and orphans—the curse of heaven!"

Mr. Lear remained speechless; awed into breathless silence by the appalling tones in which this torrent of invective was poured forth. The paroxysm passed by. Washington again sat down on the sofa—he was silent—apparently uncomfortable, as if conscious of the ungovernable burst of passion which had overcome him. "This must not go beyond this room," said he at length, in a subdued and altered tone—there was another and a longer pause; then, in a tone quite low: "General St. Clair shall have justice," said he. "I

looked hastily through the despatches; saw the whole disaster, but not all the particulars. I will receive him without displeasure; I will hear him without prejudice; he shall have full justice." *

Washington had recovered his equanimity. "The storm," we are told, "was over, and no sign of it was afterwards seen in his conduct or heard in his conversation." How well he kept his word, in regard to General St. Clair, will hereafter be shown.

*Rush's *Washington in Domestic Life.*

Chapter XXII.

The Apportionment Bill — Washington's Veto—His Concern at the Growing Asperities of Congress—Intended Retirement—Jefferson's Determination to Retire at the same Time—Remonstrance of Washington—His Request to Madison to Prepare Valedictory—Wayne Appointed to Succeed St. Clair—Congress Adjourns—Washington at Mount Vernon—Suggests Topics for his Farewell Address—Madison's Draft—Jefferson Urges his Continuance.

IN the course of the present session of Congress a bill was introduced for apportioning representatives among the people of the several States, according to the first enumeration.

The Constitution had provided that the number of representatives should not exceed one for every thirty thousand persons, and the House of Representatives passed a bill allotting to each State one member for this amount of population. This ratio would leave a fraction, greater or less, in each State. Its operation

was unequal, as in some States a large surplus would be unrepresented, and hence, in one branch of the legislature, the relative power of the State be affected. That, too, was the popular branch, which those who feared a strong executive, desired to provide with the counterpoise of as full a representation as possible.

To obviate this difficulty the Senate adopted a new principle of apportionment. They assumed the total population of the United States, and not the population of each State, as the basis on which the whole number of representatives should be ascertained. This aggregate they divided by thirty thousand: the quotient gave one hundred and twenty as the number of representatives; and this number they apportioned upon the several States according to their population; allotting to each one member for every thirty thousand, and distributing the residuary members (to make up the one hundred and twenty) among the States having the largest fractions.

After an earnest debate, the House concurred, and the bill came before the President for his decision. The sole question was as to its constitutionality; that being admitted, it was unexceptionable. Washington took the opinion of his cabinet. Jefferson and Randolph considered the act at variance with the Con-

stitution. Knox was undecided. Hamilton thought the clause of the Constitution relating to the subject, somewhat vague, and was in favor of the construction given to it by the legislature.

After weighing the arguments on both sides, and maturely deliberating, the President made up his mind that the act was unconstitutional. It was the obvious intent of the Constitution to apply the ratio of representation according to the separate numbers of each State, and not to the aggregate of the population of the United States. Now this bill allotted to eight of the States more than one representative for thirty thousand inhabitants. He accordingly returned the bill with his objections, being the first exercise of the veto power. A new bill was substituted, and passed into a law; giving a representative for every thirty-three thousand to each State.

Great heat and asperity were manifested in the discussions of Congress throughout the present session. Washington had observed with pain the political divisions which were growing up in the country; and was deeply concerned at finding that they were pervading the halls of legislation. The press, too, was contributing its powerful aid to keep up and increase the irritation. Two rival papers

existed at the seat of government; one was Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, in which John Adams had published his *Discourses on Davila;* the other was the *National Gazette*, edited by Philip Freneau. Freneau had been editor of the *New York Daily Advertiser;* but had come to Philadelphia in the autumn of 1791 to occupy the post of translating clerk in Mr. Jefferson's office, and had almost immediately (October 31) published the first number of his *Gazette*. Notwithstanding his situation in the office of the Secretary of State, Freneau became and continued to be throughout the session, a virulent assailant of most of the measures of government; excepting such as originated with Mr. Jefferson or were approved by him.

Heart-weary by the political strifes and disagreements which were disturbing the country and marring the harmony of his cabinet, the charge of government was becoming intolerably irksome to Washington; and he longed to be released from it, and to be once more master of himself, free to indulge those rural and agricultural tastes which were to give verdure and freshness to his future existence. He had some time before this expressed a determination to retire from public life at the end of his presidential term. But one more year of that

term remained to be endured; he was congratulating himself with the thought, when Mr. Jefferson intimated that it was his intention to retire from office at the same time with himself.

Washington was exceedingly discomposed by this determination. Jefferson, in his *Anas*, assures us that the President remonstrated with him against it, "in an affectionate tone." For his own part, he observed, many motives compelled him to retire. It was only after much pressing that he had consented to take a part in the new government and get it under way. Were he to continue in it longer, it might give room to say that, having tasted the sweets of office, he could not do without them.

He observed, moreover, to Jefferson, that he really felt himself growing old; that his bodily health was less firm, and his memory, always bad, was becoming worse. The other faculties of his mind, perhaps, might be evincing to others a decay of which he himself might be insensible. This apprehension, he said, particularly oppressed him.

His activity, too, had declined; business was consequently more irksome, and the longing for tranquillity and retirement had become an irresistible passion. For these reasons he felt himself obliged, he said, to retire; yet he should consider it unfortunate if, in so doing,

he should bring on the retirement of the great officers of government, which might produce a shock on the public mind of a dangerous consequence.

Jefferson, in reply, stated the reluctance with which he himself had entered upon public employment, and the resolution he had formed on accepting his station in the cabinet, to make the resignation of the President the epoch of his own retirement from labors of which he was heartily tired. He did not believe, however, that any of his brethren in the administration had any idea of retiring; on the contrary, he had perceived at a late meeting of the trustees of the sinking fund, that the Secretary of the Treasury had developed the plan he intended to pursue, and that it embraced years in its view.

Washington rejoined, that he considered the Treasury Department a limited one, going only to the single object of revenue, while that of the Secretary of State, embracing nearly all the objects of administration, was much more important, and the retirement of the officer, therefore, would be more noticed; that though the government had set out with a pretty general good-will, yet that symptoms of dissatisfaction had lately shown themselves, far beyond what he could have expected; and to what

height these might arise, in case of too great a change in the administration, could not be foreseen.

Jefferson availed himself of this opportunity to have a thrust at his political rival. "I told him" (the President), relates he, "that in my opinion there was only a single source of these discontents. Though they had, indeed, appeared to spread themselves over the War Department also, yet I considered that as an overflowing only from their real channel, which would never have taken place if they had not first been generated in another department, to wit, that of the Treasury. That a system had there been contrived for deluging the States with paper money instead of gold and silver, for withdrawing our citizens from the pursuits of commerce, manufactures, buildings, and other branches of useful industry, to occupy themselves and their capitals in a species of gambling, destructive of morality, and which had introduced its poison into the government itself." *

Mr. Jefferson went on, in the same strain, to comment at large upon the measures of Mr. Hamilton, but records no reply of importance on the part of Washington, whose object in seeking the conversation had been merely to

* Jefferson's *Works*, ix., 102.

persuade his Secretary to remain in the cabinet; and who had no relish for the censorious comments to which it had given rise.

Yet with all his political rivalry, Jefferson has left on record his appreciation of the sterling merit of Hamilton. In his *Anas*, he speaks of him as "of acute understanding, disinterested, honest, and honorable in all private transactions; amiable in society, and duly valuing virtue in private life. Yet so bewitched and perverted by the British example, as to be under thorough conviction that corruption was essential to the government of a nation."

In support of this sweeping exception to Mr. Hamilton's political orthodoxy, Mr. Jefferson gives, in his *Anas*, a conversation which occurred between that gentleman and Mr. Adams, at his (Mr. Jefferson's) table, *after the cloth was removed.* "Conversation," writes he, "began on other matters, and by some circumstance was led to the British constitution, on which Mr. Adams observed: 'Purge that constitution of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would be the most perfect constitution ever devised by the wit of man.' Hamilton paused and said: 'Purge it of its corruption, and give to its popular branch equality of representation, and it would become an *impracticable*

government; as it stands at present, with all its supposed defects, it is the most perfect government which ever existed.'" *

This after-dinner conversation appears to us very loose ground on which to found the opinion continually expressed by Mr. Jefferson, that "Mr. Hamilton was not only a monarchist, but for a monarchy bottomed on corruption."

Subsequent to Washington's remonstrance with Mr. Jefferson above cited, he had confidential conversations with Mr. Madison on the subject of his intended retirement from office at the end of the presidential term, and asked him to think what would be the proper time and mode of announcing his intention to the public; and intimating a wish that Mr. Madison would prepare for him the announcement.

Mr. Madison remonstrated in the most earnest manner against such a resolution, setting forth, in urgent language, the importance to the country of his continuing in the presidency. Washington listened to his reasoning with profound attention, but still clung to his resolution.

In consequence of St. Clair's disastrous defeat and the increasing pressure of the Indian war, bills had been passed in Congress for increasing the army, by adding three regiments

* Jefferson's *Works*, vol. ix., p. 96.

of infantry and a squadron of cavalry (which additional force was to serve for three years, unless sooner discharged), also for establishing a uniform militia system.

The question now came up as to the appointment of an officer to command in the Western frontier. General St. Clair, in a letter to Washington, expressed a wish that a court of inquiry might be instituted to investigate his conduct in the late expedition. "Your desire," replied Washington, March 28th, "of rectifying any errors of the public opinion relative to your conduct, by an investigation of a court of inquiry, is highly laudable, and would be readily complied with, were the measure practicable. But a total deficiency of officers in actual service, of competent rank to form a legal court for that purpose, precludes the power of gratifying your wishes on this occasion.

"The intimation of your wishes to afford your successor all the information of which you are capable, although unnecessary for my personal conviction, must be regarded as an additional evidence of the goodness of your heart, and of your attachment to your country."

In a letter dated March 31st, St. Clair urged reasons for being permitted to retain his commission "until an opportunity should be pre-

sented, if necessary, of investigating his conduct in every mode presented by law."

These reasons, Washington replied, would be conclusive with him under any other circumstances than the present. But the establishment of the troops," observes he, "allows only of one major-general. You have manifested your intention of retiring, and the essential interests of the public require that your successor should be immediately appointed, in order to repair to the frontiers.

"As the House of Representatives have been pleased to institute an inquiry into the causes of the failure of the late expedition, I should hope an opportunity would thereby be afforded you of explaining your conduct in a manner satisfactory to the public and yourself."

St. Clair resigned his commission, and was succeeded in his Western command by General Wayne, the Mad Anthony of the Revolution, still in the vigor of his days, being forty-seven years of age. "He has many good points as an officer," writes Washington, "and it is to be hoped that time, reflection, good advice, and, above all, a due sense of the importance of the trust which is committed to him, will correct his foibles, or cast a shade over them." *

* Letter to Governor Lee. *Washington's Writings*, x., 248.

Washington's first thought was that a decisive expedition conducted by this energetic man of the sword, might retrieve the recent frontier disgrace, and put an end to the persevering hostility of the Indians. In deference, however, to the clamors which had been raised against the war and its expenses, and to meet what appeared to be the prevalent wish of the nation, he reluctantly relinquished his more energetic policy, and gave in to that which advised further negotiations for peace; though he was far from anticipating a beneficial result.

In regard to St. Clair, we will here add: that a committee of the House of Representatives ultimately inquired into the cause of the failure of his expedition, and rendered a report, in which he was explicitly exculpated. His adjutant-general also (Winthrop Sargent), in his private diary, testifies to St. Clair's coolness and bravery, though debilitated by illness. Public sentiment, however, remained for a long time adverse to him; but Washington, satisfied with the explanations which had been given, continued to honor him with his confidence and friendship.

Congress adjourned on the 8th of May, and soon afterward Washington set off on a short visit to Mount Vernon. The season was in all its beauty, and never had this rallying place

of his affections appeared to him more attractive. How could he give up the prospect of a speedy return to its genial pursuits and pleasures from the harassing cares and janglings of public life. On the 20th of May, he wrote to Mr. Madison on the subject of their late conversation. "I have not been unmindful," says he, "of the sentiments expressed by you. On the contrary, I have again and again revolved them with thoughtful anxiety, but without being able to dispose my mind to a longer continuation in the office I have now the honor to hold. I, therefore, still look forward with the fondest and most ardent wishes to spend the remainder of my days, which I cannot expect to be long, in ease and tranquillity."

He now renewed the request he had made Mr. Madison, for advice as to the proper time and mode for announcing his intention of retiring, and for assistance in preparing the announcement. "In revolving this subject myself," writes he, "my judgment has always been embarrassed. On the one hand, a previous declaration to retire, not only carries with it the appearance of vanity and self-importance, but it may be constructed into a manœuvre to be invited to remain; and, on the other hand, to say nothing, implies consent,

or, at any rate, would leave the whole matter in doubt; and to decline afterwards might be deemed as bad as uncandid."

"I would fain carry my request to you further," adds he. "As the recess [of Congress] may afford you leisure, and, I flatter myself, you have dispositions to oblige me, I will, without apology, desire, if the measure in itself should strike you as proper, or likely to produce public good, or private honor, that you would turn your thoughts to a valedictory address from me to the public."

He then went on to suggest a number of the topics and ideas which the address was to contain; all to be expressed in "plain and modest terms." But, in the main, he left it to Mr. Madison to determine whether, in the first place, such an address would be proper; if so, what matters it ought to contain and when it ought to appear; whether at the same time with his [Washington's] declaration of his intention to retire, or at the close of his career.

Madison, in reply, approved of the measure, and advised that the notification and address should appear together, and be promulgated through the press in time to prevade every part of the Union by the beginning of November. With the letter he sent a draft of the address. "You will readily observe," writes

he, "that in executing it, I have aimed at that plainness and modesty of language, which you had in view, and which, indeed, are so peculiarly becoming the character and the occasion; and that I had little more to do as to the matter, than to follow the just and comprehensive outline which you had sketched. I flatter myself, however, that, in everything which has depended on me, much improvement will be made, before so interesting a paper shall have taken its last form." *

Before concluding his letter, Madison expressed a hope that Washington would reconsider his idea of retiring from office, and that the country might not, at so important a juncture, be deprived of the inestimable advantage of having him at the head of its councils.

On the 23d of May, Jefferson also addressed a long letter to Washington on the same subject. "When you first mentioned to me your purpose of retiring from the government, though I felt all the magnitude of the event, I was in a considerable degree silent. I knew that, to such a mind as yours, persuasion was idle and impertinent; that, before forming your decision, you had weighed all the reasons for and against the measure, had made up your mind in full view of them, and that there could

* *Washington's Writings.* Sparks, xii., 382.

be little hope of changing the result. Pursuing my reflections, too, I knew we were some day to try to walk alone, and, if the essay should be made while you should be alive and looking on, we should derive confidence from that circumstance, and resource if it failed. The public mind, too, was then calm and confident, and therefore in a favorable state for making the experiment. But the public mind is no longer so confident and serene; and that from causes in which you are no ways personally mixed."

Jefferson now launched out against the public debt and all the evils which he apprehended from the funding system, the ultimate object of all which was, said he, "to prepare the way for a change from the present republican form of government to that of a monarchy, of which the English constitution is to be the model." He concluded by pronouncing the continuance of Washington at the head of affairs, to be of the last importance.

"The confidence of the whole Union," writes he, "is centered in you. Your being at the helm will be more than an answer to every argument which can be used to alarm and lead the people in any quarter into violence or secession. North and South will hang together, if they have you to hang on; and, if

the first corrective of a numerous representation should fail in its effect, your presence will give time for trying others not inconsistent with the union and peace of the States.

"I am perfectly aware of the oppression under which your present office lays your mind, and of the ardor with which you pant for retirement to domestic life. But there is sometimes an eminence of character on which society have such peculiar claims, as to control the predilections of the individual for a particular walk of happiness, and restrain him to that alone, arising from the present and future benediction of mankind. This seems to be your condition, and the law imposed on you by Providence, in forming your character, and fashioning the events on which it was to operate; and it is to motives like these, and not to personal anxieties of mine or others, who have no right to call on you for sacrifices, that I appeal from your former determination and urge a revisal of it, on the ground of change in the aspect of things. Should an honest majority result from the new and enlarged representation, should those acquiesce, whose principles or interests they may control, your wishes for retirement would be gratified with less danger, as soon as that shall be manifest, without awaiting the completion of the second

period of four years. One or two sessions will determine the crisis; and I cannot but hope, that you can resolve to add one or two more to the many years you have already sacrificed to the good of mankind." *

Writings, x., 508.

Chapter XVII.

Jefferson's Suspicion — Contemned by Hamilton — Washington's Expostulation — Complains of the Conduct of Freneau's Paper—Hamilton and Randolph Urge him to a Re-election—A Warring Cabinet—Hamilton's Attack on Jefferson—Washington's Healing Admonitions—Replies of the two Secretaries—Continued Hostility to the Excise Law—Washington's Proclamation — Renewed Effort to Allay the Discord in his Cabinet.

THE letter of Jefferson was not received by Washington until after his return to Philadelphia, and the purport of it was so painful to him, that he deferred from day to day having any conversation with that statesman on the subject. A letter written in the meantime, by Jefferson to Lafayette, shows the predominant suspicion, or rather belief, which had fixed itself in the mind of the former, and was shaping his course of action.

"A sect," writes he, "has shown itself among us, who declare they espoused our

Constitution not as a good and sufficient thing in itself, but only as a step to an English constitution, the only good and sufficient in itself, in their eyes. It is happy for us that these are preachers without followers, and that our people are firm and constant in their republican purity. You will wonder to be told that it is from the eastward chiefly, that these champions for a king, lords, and commons, come. They get some important associates from New York, and are puffed up by a tribe of Agioteurs which have been hatched in a bed of corruption, made up after the model of their beloved England. Too many of these stock-jobbers and king-jobbers have come into our legislature, or rather, too many of our legislature have become stock-jobbers and king-jobbers. However, the voice of the people is beginning to make itself heard, and will probably cleanse their seats at the next election." *

In regard to the suspicions and apprehensions avowed in the above letter, and which apparently were haunting Jefferson's mind, Hamilton expressed himself roundly in one of his cabinet papers :

"The idea of introducing a monarchy or aristocracy into this country, by employing the influence and force of a government continu-

* Jefferson's *Works*, iii., 450.

ally changing hands, towards it, is one of those visionary things that none but madmen could meditate and that no wise man will believe. If it could be done at all, which is utterly incredible, it would require a long series of time, certainly beyond the life of any individual, to effect it—who, then, would enter into such a plot? for what purpose of interest or ambition?"

And as to the charge of stock-gambling in the legislature, Hamilton indignantly writes: "As far as I know, there is not a member of the legislature who can properly be called a stock-jobber or a paper-dealer. There are several of them who were proprietors of public debt, in various ways; some for money lent and property furnished for the use of the public during the war, others for sums received in payment of debts, and it is supposable enough that some of them had been purchasers of the public debt, with intention to hold it as a valuable and convenient property, considering an honorable provision for it as a matter of course.

"It is a strange perversion of ideas, and as novel as it is extraordinary, that men should be deemed corrupt and criminal for becoming proprietors in the funds of their country. Yet, I believe the number of members of Congress

is very small, who have ever been considerable proprietors in the funds. As to improper speculations on measures depending before Congress, I believe never was any body of men freer from them." *

On the 10th of July, Washington had a conversation with Jefferson on the subject of the letter he had recently received from him; and endeavored with his usual supervising and moderating assiduity to allay the jealousies and suspicions which were disturbing the mind of that ardent politician. These, he intimated, had been carried a great deal too far. There might be *desires*, he said, among a few in the higher walks of life, particularly in the great cities, to change the form of government into a monarchy, but he did not believe there were any *designs;* and he believed the main body of the people in the Eastern States were as steadily for republicanism as in the Southern.

He now spoke with earnestness about articles in the public papers, especially in the *Gazette* edited by Freneau, the object of which seemed to be to excite opposition to the government, and which had actually excited it in Pennsylvania, in regard to the excise law. "These articles," said he, feelingly, "tend to produce a separation of the Union, *the most*

* Hamilton's *Works*, iv., 268.

dreadful of calamities; and whatever tends to produce anarchy, tends, of course, to produce a resort to monarchical government."

The articles in question had, it is true, been chiefly levelled at the Treasury Department, but Washington accepted no immunity from attacks pointed at any department of his government, assuming that they were aimed directly at himself. "In condemning the administration of the government, they condemned me," said he, "for, if they thought these were measures pursued contrary to my sentiments, they must conceive me too careless to attend to them or too stupid to understand them."

He acknowledged, indeed, that he had signed many acts of which he did not approve in all their parts; but never had he put his hand to one which he did not think eligible, on the whole.

As to the bank which had been so much complained of, he observed that, until there was some infallible criterion of reason, a difference of opinion must be tolerated. He did not believe the discontents extended far from the seat of government. He had seen and spoken with many people in Maryland and Virginia in his late journey, and had found them contented and happy.

Jefferson's observations in reply tended, principally to iterate and enforce what he had already urged in his letter. The two great popular complaints were, he said, that the national debt was unnecessarily increased by the Assumption, and that it had furnished the means of corrupting both branches of the legislature. In both Houses there was a considerable squadron whose votes were devoted to the paper and stock-jobbing interest. On examining the votes of these men they would be found uniformly for every treasury measure, and as most of these measures had been carried by small majorities, they had been carried by these very votes. It was a cause of just uneasiness, therefore, when we saw a legislature legislating for their own interests in opposition to those of the people.

"Washington," observed Jefferson, "said not a word of the corruption of the legislature." He probably did not feel disposed to contend against what he may have considered jealous suspicions and deductions. But he took up the other point and defended the Assumption, agreeing, says Jefferson, that it had not increased the debt, *for that all of it was honest debt.*

He justified the excise law, too, as one of the best laws that could be passed, as nobody would pay the tax who did not choose to do it.

We give this conversation as noted down by Jefferson in his *Anas*. It is one of the very few instances we have of Washington's informal discussions with the members of his cabinet, and it bears the stamp of that judgment, considerateness, delicacy, and good faith which enabled him to moderate and manage the wayward passions and impulses of able men.

Hamilton was equally strenuous with Jefferson in urging upon Washington the policy of a re-election, as it regarded the public good, and wrote to him fully on the subject. It was the opinion of every one, he alleged, with whom he had conversed, that the affairs of the national government were not yet firmly established: that its enemies, generally speaking, were as inveterate as ever; that their enmity had been sharpened by its success and all the resentments which flow from disappointed predictions and mortified vanity; that a general and strenuous effort was making in every State to place the administration of it in the hands of its enemies, as if they were its safest guardians; that the period of the next House of Representatives was likely to prove the crisis of its national character; that if Washington continued in office, nothing materially mischievous was to be apprehended; but, if he should quit, much was to be dreaded; that the

same motives which had induced him to accept originally, ought to decide him to continue till matters had assumed a more determinate aspect; that, indeed, it would have been better as it regarded his own character, that he had never consented to come forward, than now to leave the business unfinished and in danger of being undone; that in the event of storms arising, there would be an imputation either of want of foresight or want of firmness; and, in fine, that on public and personal accounts, on patriotic and prudential considerations, the clear path to be pursued by him would be again to obey the voice of his country; which, it was not doubted, would be as earnest and as unanimous as ever.

In concluding his letter, Hamilton observes, "The sentiments I have delivered upon this occasion, I can truly say, proceed exclusively from an anxious concern for the public welfare and an affectionate personal attachment."

Mr. Edmund Randolph also, after a long letter on the "jeopardy of the Union," which seemed to him "at the eve of a crisis," adds: "The fuel which has been already gathered for combustion wants no addition. But how awfully might it be increased, were the violence, which is now suspended by a universal submission to your pretensions, let loose by your

resignation. Permit me, then, in the fervor of a dutiful and affectionate attachment to you, to beseech you to penetrate the consequences of a dereliction of the reins. The Constitution would never have been adopted but from a knowledge that you had once sanctioned it, and an expectation that you would execute it. It is in a state of probation. The most inauspicious struggles are past, but the public deliberations need stability. You alone can give them stability. You suffered yourself to yield when the voice of your country summoned you to the administration. Should a civil war arise, you cannot stay at home. And how much easier will it be to disperse the factions, which are rushing to this catastrophe, than to subdue them after they shall appear in arms? It is the fixed opinion of the world, that you surrender nothing incomplete." *

Not the cabinet, merely, divided as it was in its political opinions, but all parties, however discordant in other points, concurred in a desire that Washington should continue in office—so truly was he regarded as the choice of the nation.

But though the cabinet was united in feeling on this one subject, in other respects its dissensions were increasing in virulence. Hamil-

* *Washington's Writings*, x., 514.

ton, aggrieved by the attacks made in Freneau's paper upon his funding and banking system, his duty on home-made spirits, and other points of his financial policy, and upon himself by holding him up as a monarchist at heart, and considering these attacks as originating in the hostility of Freneau's patron, Mr. Jefferson, addressed a note signed T. L. to the editor of the *Gazette of the United States*, in which he observes that the editor of the *National Gazette* received a salary from government, adding the significant query—whether this salary was paid him for translations or publications, the design of which was to vilify those to whom the voice of the people had committed the administration of our public affairs, to oppose the measures of government, and, by false insinuations, to disturb the public peace? "In common life it is thought ungrateful for a man to bite the hand that puts bread in his mouth; but, if the man is hired to do it, the case is altered."

In another article, dated August 4th, Mr. Hamilton, under the signature of "An American," gave some particulars of the negotiations which ended in the establishment of the *National Gazette*, devoted to the interests of a certain party, of which Mr. Jefferson was the head. "An experiment," said he, "some-

what new in the history of political manœuvres in this country; a newspaper instituted by a public officer, and the editor of it regularly pensioned with the public money in the disposal of that officer. . . . But, it may be asked, is it possible that Mr. Jefferson, the head of a principal department of the government, can be the patron of a paper, the evident object of which is to decry the government and its measures? If he disapproves of the government itself and thinks it deserving of his opposition, can he reconcile it to his own personal dignity and the principles of probity, to hold an office under it, and employ the means of official influence in that opposition? If he disapproves of the leading measures which have been adopted in the course of his administration, can he reconcile it with the principles of delicacy and propriety, to hold a place in that administration, and at the same time to be instrumental in vilifying measures which have been adopted by majorities of both branches of the legislature, *and sanctioned by the chief magistrate of the Union?*"

This attack brought out an affidavit from Mr. Freneau, in which he declared that his coming to Philadelphia was his own voluntary act; that, as an editor of a newspaper, he had never been urged, advised, or influenced by

Mr. Jefferson, and that not a single line of his *Gazette* was ever directly or indirectly written, dictated, or composed for it, by the Secretary of State.

Washington had noticed this growing feud with excessive pain, and at length found it necessary to interfere and attempt a reconciliation between the warring parties. In the course of a letter to Jefferson (August 23d), on the subject of Indian hostilities, and the possibility of their being furnished by foreign agents to check, as far as possible, the rapid increase, extension, and consequence of the United States, "How unfortunate then," observes he, "and how much to be regreted that, while we are encompassed on all sides with armed enemies and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The latter, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions and acts of one another in governmental matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be prejudged, than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the reins of government, or to keep the parts of it together; for

if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine after measures are decided on, one pulls this way and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and, in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost perhaps forever.

"My earnest wish and fondest hope, therefore, is, that instead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporizing yieldings on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, everything must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting."

Admonitions to the same purport were addressed by him to Hamilton. "Having premised these things," adds he, "I would fain hope that liberal allowances will be made for the political opinions of each other; and, instead of those wounding suspicions and irritating charges, with which some of our gazettes are so strongly impregnated, and which cannot fail, if persevered in, of pushing matters to

extremity, and thereby tearing the machine asunder, that there may be mutual forbearance and temporizing yielding *on all sides*. Without these I do not see how the reins of government are to be managed, or how the Union of the States can be much longer preserved." . . .

"I do not mean to apply this advice to any measures which are passed, or to any particular character. I have given it in the same *general* terms to other officers of the government. My earnest wish is, that balsam may be poured into *all* the wounds which have been given, to prevent them from gangrening, and from those fatal consequences, which the community may sustain if it is withheld." *

Hamilton was prompt and affectionate in his reply, expressing sincere regret at the circumstances which had given rise to the uneasy sensations experienced by Washington. "It is my most anxious wish," writes he, "as far as may depend upon me, to smooth the path of your administration, and to render it prosperous and happy. And, if any prospect shall open of healing or terminating the differences which exist, I shall most cheerfully embrace it; though I consider myself as the deeply injured party. The recommendation of such

**Writings*, x., 284.

a spirit is worthy of the moderation and wisdom which dictated it."

He then frankly acknowledged that he had had "some instrumentality" in the retaliations which of late had fallen upon certain public characters.

"I considered myself compelled to this conduct," adds he, "by reasons public as well as personal, of the most cogent nature. I *know* I have been an object of uniform opposition from Mr. Jefferson, from the moment of his coming to the city of New York to enter upon his present office. I *know*, from the most authentic sources, that I have been the frequent subject of the most unkind whispers and insinuations from the same quarter. I have long seen a formed party in the legislature under his auspices, bent upon my subversion. I cannot doubt, from the evidence I possess, that the *National Gazette* was instituted by him for political purposes, and that one leading object of it has been to render me and all the measures connected with my department as odious as possible. Nevertheless," proceeds he, "I can truly say, that, excepting explanations to confidential friends, I never, directly or indirectly, retaliated or countenanced retaliation till very lately. . . . But when I no longer doubted that there was a formed party deliber-

ately bent upon the subversion of measures which, in its consequences, would subvert the government; when I saw that the undoing of the funding system in particular (which, whatever may be the original measures of that system, would prostrate the credit and honor of the nation, and bring the government into contempt with that description of men who are in every society the only firm supporters of government) was an avowed object of the party; and that all possible pains were taken to produce that effect, by rendering it odious to the body of the people, I considered it a duty to endeavor to resist the torrent, and, as an effectual means to this end, to draw aside the veil from the principal actors. To this strong impulse, to this decided conviction, I have yielded; and I think events will prove that I have judged rightly.

"Nevertheless, I pledge my hand to you, sir, that, if you shall hereafter form a plan to reunite the members of your administration upon some steady principle of co-operation, I will faithfully concur in executing it during my continuance in office. And I will not, directly or indirectly, say or do a thing that shall endanger a feud."

Jefferson, too, in a letter of the same date, assured Washington that to no one had the dissensions of the cabinet given deeper concern

than to himself—to no one equal mortification at being himself a part of them. His own grievances, which led to those dissensions, he traced back to the time when Hamilton, in the spring of 1790, procured his influence to effect a change in the vote on Assumption. "When I embarked in the government," writes he, "it was with a determination to intermeddle not at all with the legislature, and as little as possible with my co-departments. The first and only instance of variance from the former part of my resolution, I was duped into by the Secretary of the Treasury, and made a tool for forwarding his schemes, not then sufficiently understood by me; and of all the errors of my political life, this has occasioned me the deepest regret." . . . "If it has been supposed that I have ever intrigued among the members of the legislature to defeat the plans of the Secretary of the Treasury, it is contrary to all truth. . . . That I have utterly, in my private conversations, disapproved of the system of the Secretary of the Treasury, I acknowledge and avow; and this was not merely a speculative difference. His system flowed from principles adverse to liberty, and was calculated to undermine and demolish the republic by creating an influence of his department over the members of the legislature."

In regard to Freneau's *Gazette*, Mr. Jefferson absolutely denied that he had set it up, but admitted that, on its first establishment, and subsequently from time to time, he had furnished the editor with the Leyden *Gazette*, requesting that he would always translate and publish the material intelligence contained in them. "But as to any other direction or indication," adds he, "of my wish how his press should be conducted, what sort of intelligence he should give, what essays encourage, I can protest, in the presence of Heaven, that I never did, by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, say a syllable, nor attempt any kind of influence. I can further protest in the same awful presence, that I never did, by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, write, dictate, or procure any one sentence or sentiment to be inserted *in his or any other Gazette*, to which my name was not affixed, or that of my office. . . .

"Freneau's proposition to publish a paper having been about the time that the writings of 'Publicola' and the *Discourses on Davila* had a good deal excited the public attention, I took it for granted, from Freneau's character, which had been marked as that of a good whig, that he would give free place to pieces written against the aristocratical and

monarchical principles these papers had inculcated.

"As to the merits or demerits of his paper, they certainly concern me not. He and Fenno [editor of the *United States Gazette*] are rivals for the public favor; the one courts them by flattery, the other by censure; and I believe it will be admitted that the one has been as servile as the other severe. But is not the dignity and even decency of government committed, when one of its principal ministers enlists himself as an anonymous writer or paragraphist for either the one or the other of them?"

Mr. Jefferson considered himself particularly aggrieved by charges against him in Fenno's *Gazette*, which he ascribed to the pen of Mr. Hamilton, and intimated the possibility, that after his retirement from office, he might make an appeal to the country, should his own justification or the interests of the Republic require it, subscribing his name to whatever he might write, and using with freedom and truth the facts and names necessary to place the cause in its just form before that tribunal. "To a thorough disregard of the honors and emoluments of office, I join as great a value for the esteem of my countrymen; and conscious of having merited it by an integrity which cannot be reproached, and by an enthu-

siastic devotion to their rights and liberty, I will not suffer my retirement to be clouded by the slanders of a man, whose history, from the moment at which history can stoop to notice him, is a tissue of machinations against the liberty of the country which has not only received and given him bread, but heaped its honors on his head."

Washington's solicitude for harmony in his cabinet had been rendered more anxious by public disturbances in some parts of the country. The excise law on ardent spirits distilled within the United States, had, from the time of its enactment by Congress in 1791, met with opposition from the inhabitants of the western counties of Pennsylvania. It had been modified and rendered less offensive within the present year; but the hostility to it had continued. Combinations were formed to defeat the execution of it, and the revenue officers were riotously opposed in the execution of their duties.

Determined to exert all the legal powers with which he was invested to check so daring and unwarrantable a spirit, Washington, on the 15th of September, issued a proclamation, warning all persons to desist from such unlawful combinations and proceedings, and requiring all courts, magistrates, and officers, to bring

the infractors of the law to justice; copies of which proclamation were sent to the governors of Pennsylvania and of North and South Carolina.

On the 18th of October, Washington made one more effort to allay the discord in his cabinet. Finding it impossible for the rival secretaries to concur in any system of politics, he urged them to accommodate their differences by mutual yieldings. "A measure of this sort," observed he, "would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils, and the contrary will inevitably produce confusion and serious mischiefs; and all for what? Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to attain the same end. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both to be pure and well meant, and that experience only will decide with respect to the salutariness of the measures which are the subjects of this dispute."

"Why, then, when some of the best citizens of the United States—men of discernment—uniform and tried patriots—who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side and some on the other of the questions which have caused these agitations—why should either of you be so tenacious of

your opinions as to make no allowance for those of the other?

. . . . . .

"I have a great, a sincere esteem and regard for you both; and ardently wish that some line could be marked out by which both of you could walk."

Chapter XXIII.

Washington Unanimously Re-elected—Opening of Session of Congress — Topics of the President's Speech—Abortive Attack upon the Secretary of the Treasury — Washington Installed for his Second Term.

IT was after a long and painful conflict of feelings that Washington consented to be a candidate for a re-election. There was no opposition on the part of the public, and the vote for him in the Electoral College was unanimous. In a letter to a friend, he declared himself gratefully impressed by so distinguished and honorable a testimony of public approbation and confidence. In truth he had been apprehensive of being elected by but a meagre majority, which he acknowledged would have been a matter of chagrin.

George Clinton of New York, was held up for the Vice-presidency, in opposition to John Adams; but the latter was re-elected by a majority of twenty-seven electoral votes.

But though gratified to find that the hearts of his countrymen were still with him, it was with no emotion of pleasure that Washington looked forward to another term of public duty, and a prolonged absence from the quiet retirement of Mount Vernon.

The session of Congress, which was to close his present term, opened on the 5th of November. The continuance of the Indian war formed a painful topic in the President's address. Efforts at pacification had as yet been unsuccessful: two brave officers, Colonel Hardin and Major Trueman, who had been sent to negotiate with the savages, had been severally murdered. Vigorous preparations were therefore making for an active prosecution of hostilities, in which Wayne was to take the field. Washington, with benevolent earnestness, dwelt upon the humane system of civilizing the tribes, by inculcating agricultural tastes and habits.

The factious and turbulent opposition which had been made in some parts of the country to the collection of duties on spirituous liquors distilled in the United States, was likewise adverted to by the President, and a determination expressed to assert and maintain the just authority of the laws; trusting in the "full co-operation of the other departments of gov-

ernment, and the zealous support of all good citizens."

In a part of the speech addressed to the House of Representatives, he expressed a strong hope that the state of the national finances was now sufficiently matured to admit of an arrangement for the redemption and discharge of the public debt. "No measure," said he, "can be more desirable, whether viewed with an eye to its intrinsic importance, or to the general sentiment and wish of the nation."

The address was well received by both houses, and a disposition expressed to concur with the President's views and wishes. The discussion of the subjects to which he had called their attention, soon produced vehement conflicts of opinion in the House, marking the growing virulence of parties. The Secretary of the Treasury, in reporting, at the request of the House, a plan for the annual reduction of so much of the national debt as the United States had a right to redeem, spoke of the expenses of the Indian war, and the necessity of additional internal taxes. The consideration of the report was parried or evaded, and a motion made to reduce the military establishment. This gave an opportunity for sternly criticising the mode in which the Indian war

had been conducted; for discussing the comparative merits and cost of regular and militia forces, and for inveighing against standing armies, as dangerous to liberty. These discussions, while they elicited much heat, led to no present result, and gave way to an inquiry into the conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury in regard to certain loans, which the President, in conformity to acts of Congress, had authorized him to make; but concerning the management of which he had not furnished detailed reports to the legislature.

The subject was opened by Mr. Giles of Virginia, who moved in the House of Representatives a series of resolutions seeking information in the matter, and who followed his resolutions by a speech, charging the Secretary of the Treasury with official misconduct, and intimating that a large balance of public money had not been accounted for.

A report of the Secretary gave all the information desired; but the charges against him continued to be urged with great acrimony to the close of the session, when they were signally rejected, not more than sixteen members voting for any one of them.

The veneration inspired by the character of Washington, and the persuasion that he would never permit himself to be considered the head

of a party, had hitherto shielded him from attack; a little circumstance, however, showed that the rancor of party was beginning to glance at him.

On his birthday (February 22d) many of the members of Congress were desirous of waiting on him, in testimony of respect as chief magistrate of the Union, and a motion was made to adjourn for half an hour for the purpose. It met with serious opposition as a species of homage—it was setting up an idol dangerous to liberty—it had a bias towards monarchy!

Washington though he never courted popularity, was attentive to the signs of public opinion, and disposed to be guided by them when right. The time for entering upon his second term of Presidency was at hand. There had been much cavilling at the parade attending his first installation. Jefferson especially had pronounced it "not at all in character with the simplicity of republican government, and looking, as if wishfully, to those of European Courts."

To guide him on the coming occasion, Washington called the heads of departments together, and desired they would consult with one another, and agree on any changes they might consider for the better, assuring them he would willingly conform to whatever they should advise.

They held such consultation, and ultimately gave their individual opinions in writing, with regard to the time, manner, and place of the President's taking the oath of office. As they were divided in opinion, and gave no positive advice as to any change, no change was made. On the 4th of March, the oath was publicly administered to Washington by Mr. Justice Cushing, in the Senate chamber, in presence of the heads of departments, foreign ministers, such members of the House of Representatives as were in town, and as many other spectators as could be accommodated.

Chapter XXIV.

Gouverneur Morris Minister at the French Court—His Representations of the State of Affairs—Washington's Concern for Lafayette—Jefferson Annoyed at his Forebodings—Overthrow of the French Monarchy—Imprisonment of Lafayette—Jefferson Concerned, but not Discouraged at the Republican Massacre—Washington Shocked—His Letter to the Marchioness Lafayette.

EARLY in 1792, Gouverneur Morris had received the appointment of minister plenipotentiary to the French court. His diplomatic correspondence from Paris gave shocking accounts of the excesses attending the revolution. France, he represented as governed by Jacobin clubs. Lafayette, by endeavoring to check their excesses, had completely lost his authority. "Were he to appear just now in Paris, unattended by his army," writes Morris, "he would be torn to pieces." Washington received these accounts with deep concern. What was to be the fate

Gouverneur Morris.

H. B. Hall.

of that distracted country—what was to be the fate of his friend!

Jefferson was impatient of these gloomy picturings; especially when he saw their effect upon Washington's mind. "The fact is," writes he, "that Gouverneur Morris, a high-flying monarchy man, shutting his eyes and his faith to every fact against his wishes, and believing everything he desires to be true, has kept the President's mind constantly poisoned with his forebodings."

His forebodings, however, were soon verified. Lafayette addressed from his camp a letter to the Legislative Assembly, formally denouncing the conduct of the Jacobin club as violating the declaration of rights and the constitution. His letter was of no avail. On the 20th of June bands from the Faubourg St. Antoine, armed with pikes, and headed by Santerre, marched to the Tuileries, insulted the king in the presence of his family, obliging him to put on the *bonnet rouge*, the baleful cap of liberty of the revolution. Lafayette, still loyal to his sovereign, hastened to Paris, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, and demanded, in the name of the army, the punishment of those who had thus violated the constitution, by insulting, in his palace, the chief of the executive power. His intervention proved of no

avail, and he returned with a sad and foreboding heart to his army.

On the 9th of August, Paris was startled by the sound of the fatal tocsin at midnight. On the 10th the chateau of the Tuileries was attacked, and the Swiss guard who defended it, were massacred. The king and queen took refuge in the National Assembly, which body decreed the suspension of the king's authority. It was at once the overthrow of the monarchy, the annihilation of the constitutional party, and the commencement of the reign of terror. Lafayette, who was the head of the constitutionalists, was involved in their downfall. The Jacobins denounced him in the National Assembly; his arrest was decreed, and emissaries were sent to carry the decree into effect. At first he thought of repairing at once to Paris and facing his accusers, but, on second thoughts, determined to bend before the storm and await the return of more propitious days.

Leaving everything in order in his army, which remained encamped at Sedan, he set off with a few trusty friends for the Netherlands, to seek an asylum in Holland or the United States, but, with his companions, was detained a prisoner at Rochefort, the first Austrian post. "Thus his circle is completed," writes Morris. "He has spent his fortune on a revolution,

and is now crushed by the wheel which he put in motion. He lasted longer than I expected."

Washington looked with a sadder eye on this catastrophe of Lafayette's high-hearted and gallant aspirations, and mourned over the adverse fortunes of his friend.

The reign of terror continued. "We have had one week of unchecked murders, in which some thousands have perished in this city," writes Morris to Jefferson, on the 10th of September. "It began with between two and three hundred of the clergy, who had been shot because they would not take the oaths prescribed by the law, and which they said were contrary to their conscience." Thence *these executors of speedy justice* went to the *abbaye* where persons were confined who were at court on the 10th of August. These were despatched also, and afterwards they visited the other prisons. "All those who were confined either on the accusation or suspicion of crimes, were destroyed."

The accounts of these massacres grieved Mr. Jefferson. They were shocking in themselves, and he feared they might bring great discredit upon the Jacobins of France, whom he considered republican patriots, bent on the establishment of a free constitution. They had acquiesced for a time, said he, in the experi-

ment of retaining an hereditary executive, but finding, if pursued, it would insure the re-establishment of a despotism, they considered it absolutely indispensable to expunge that office. "In the struggle which was necessary, many guilty persons fell without the forms of trial, and with them, some innocent. These I deplore as much as anybody, and shall deplore some of them to the day of my death. But I deplore them as I should have done had they fallen in battle. It was necessary to use the arm of the people, a machine not quite so blind as balls and bombs, but blind to a certain degree. A few of their cordial friends met at their hands the fate of enemies. But time and truth will rescue and embalm their memories, while their posterity will be enjoying that very liberty for which they would never have hesitated to offer up their lives. The liberty of the whole earth was depending on the issue of the contest, and was ever such a prize won with so little innocent blood? My own affections have been deeply wounded by some of the martyrs to this cause, but rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated; were there but an Adam and Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than as it is now." *

*Letter to Mr. Short. Jefferson's *Works*, iii., 501.

Washington, who contemplated the French revolution with a less sanguine eye than Jefferson, was simply shocked at the atrocities which disgraced it and at the dangers to be apprehended from an unrestrained populace. A letter which he received from Gouverneur Morris (dated October 23d), placed the condition of the unfortunate Louis XVI., the ancient friend and ally of America, in a light to awaken his benevolent sympathy. "You will have seen," writes Morris, "that the king is accused of high crimes and misdemeanors; but I verily believe that he wished sincerely for this nation, the enjoyment of the utmost degree of liberty, which their situation and circumstances will permit. He wished for a good constitution, but, unfortunately, he had not the means to obtain it, or if he had, he was thwarted by those about him. What may be his fate God only knows, but history informs us that the passage of dethroned monarchs is short from the prison to the grave."

Nothing, however, in all the eventful tidings from France, gave Washington greater concern than the catastrophe of his friend Lafayette. His first thoughts prompted the consolation and assistance of the marchioness. In a letter to her he writes: "If I had words that could convey to you an adequate idea of my feelings

on the present situation of the Marquis Lafayette, this letter would appear to you in a different garb. The sole object in writing to you now, is to inform you that I have deposited in the hands of Mr. Nicholas Van Staphorst of Amsterdam, two thousand three hundred and ten guilders, Holland currency, equal to two hundred guineas, subject to your orders.

"This sum is, I am certain, the least I am indebted for services rendered me by the Marquis de Lafayette, of which I never yet have received the account. I could add much, but it is best, perhaps, that I should say little on this subject. Your goodness will supply my deficiency.

"The uncertainty of your situation, after all the inquiries I have made, has occasioned a delay in this address and remittance; and even now the measure adopted is more the effect of a desire to find where you are, than from any knowledge I have obtained of your residence."

Madame de Lafayette, in fact, was at that time a prisoner in France, in painful ignorance of her husband's fate. She had been commanded by the Jacobin committee to repair to Paris about the time of the massacres, but was subsequently permitted to reside at Chavaniac, under the surveillance of the municipality.

We will anticipate events by adding here,

that some time afterwards, finding her husband was a prisoner in Austria, she obtained permission to leave France, and ultimately, with her two daughters, joined him in his prison at Olmutz. George Washington Lafayette, the son of the general, determined to seek an asylum in America.

In the meantime, the arms of revolutionary France were crowned with great success. "Towns fall before them without a blow," writes Gouverneur Morris, "and the declaration of rights produces an effect equal at least to the trumpets of Joshua." But Morris was far from drawing a favorable augury from this success. "We must observe the civil, moral, religious, and political institutions," said he. "These have a steady and lasting effect, and these only. . . . Since I have been in this country, I have seen the worship of many idols, and but little of the true God. I have seen many of those idols broken and some of them beaten to dust. I have seen the late constitution, in one short year, admired as a stupendous monument of human wisdom, and ridiculed as an egregious production of folly and vice. I wish much, very much, the happiness of this inconstant people. I love them. I feel grateful for their efforts in our cause, and I consider the establishment of a good constitution here

as the principal means, under Divine Providence, of extending the blessings of freedom to the many millions of my fellow-men, who groan in bondage on the continent of Europe. But I do not greatly indulge the flattering illusions of hope, because I do not yet perceive that reformation of morals, without which, liberty is but an empty sound." *

* *Life of Morris*, ii., 248.

Chapter XXV.

Washington's Entrance upon his Second Term—Gloomy Auspices—Execution of Louis XVI.—France Declares War against England—Belligerent Excitement in America—Proclamation of Neutrality—French Mission to the United States—Genet Arrives in Charleston—His Reception in Philadelphia—Views of Jefferson and Hamilton—Washington's Dispassionate Opinion.

IT was under gloomy auspices, a divided cabinet, an increasing exasperation of parties, a suspicion of monarchical tendencies, and a threatened abatement of popularity, that Washington entered upon his second term of presidency. It was a portentous period in the history of the world, for in a little while came news of that tragical event, the beheading of Louis XVI. It was an event deplored by many of the truest advocates of liberty in America, who, like Washington, remembered that unfortunate monarch as the

friend of their country in her revolutionary struggle; but others, zealots in the cause of political reform, considered it with complacency, as sealing the downfall of the French monarchy and the establishment of a republic.

An event followed hard upon it to shake the quiet of the world. Early in April intelligence was received that France had declared war against England. Popular excitement was now wound up to the highest pitch. What, it was asked, were the Americans to do in such a juncture? Could they remain unconcerned spectators of a conflict between their ancient enemy and republican France? Should they fold their arms and look coldly on a war, begun, it is true, by France, but threatening the subversion of the republic, and the re-establishment of a monarchical government?

Many, in the wild enthusiasm of the moment, would at once have precipitated the country into a war. Fortunately this belligerent impulse was not general, and was checked by the calm, controlling wisdom of Washington. He was at Mount Vernon when he received news of the war, and understood that American vessels were already designated, and some even fitting out to serve in it as privateers. He forthwith despatched a letter to Jefferson on the subject. "War having actually com-

menced between France and Great Britain," writes he, "it behooves the government of this country to use every means in its power to prevent the citizens thereof from embroiling us with either of those powers, by endeavoring to maintain a strict neutrality."

Hastening back to Philadelphia, he held a cabinet council on the 19th of April, to deliberate on the measures proper to be observed by the United States in the present crisis; and to determine upon a general plan of conduct for the Executive.

In this council it was unanimously determined that a proclamation should be issued by the President, "forbidding the citizens of the United States to take part in any hostilities on the seas, and warning them against carrying to the belligerents any articles deemed contraband according to the modern usages of nations, and forbidding all acts and proceedings inconsistent with the duties of a friendly nation towards those at war."

It was unanimously agreed also, that should the republic of France send a minister to the United States, he should be received.

No one at the present day questions the wisdom of Washington's proclamation of neutrality. It was our true policy to keep aloof from European war, in which our power would be

inefficient, our loss certain. The measure, however, was at variance with the enthusiastic feelings and excited passions of a large portion of the citizens. They treated it for a time with some forbearance, out of long-cherished reverence for Washington's name; but his popularity, hitherto unlimited, was no proof against the inflamed state of public feeling. The proclamation was stigmatized as a royal edict; a daring assumption of power; an open manifestation of partiality for England and hostility to France.

Washington saw that a deadly blow was aimed at his influence and his administration, and that both were at hazard; but he was convinced that neutrality was the true national policy, and he resolved to maintain it, whatever might be his immediate loss of popular favor. His resolution was soon put to the test.

The French republic had recently appointed Edmond Charles Genet, or "Citizen Genet," as he was styled, minister to the United States. He was represented as a young man of good parts, very well educated, and of an ardent temper. He had served in the bureau of Foreign Affairs, under the ministry of Vergennes, and been employed in various diplomatic situations until the overthrow of the monarchy, when he joined the popular party,

became a political zealot, and member of the Jacobin club, and was rewarded with the mission to America.

A letter from Gouverneur Morris apprised Mr. Jefferson that the Executive Council had furnished Genet with three hundred blank commissions for privateers, to be given clandestinely to such persons as he might find in America inclined to take them. "They suppose," writes Morris, "that the avidity of some adventurers may lead them into measures which would involve altercations with Great Britain, and terminate finally in a war."

Genet's conduct proved the correctness of this information. He had landed at Charleston, South Carolina, from the French frigate the *Ambuscade*, on the 8th of April, a short time before the proclamation of neutrality, and was received with great rejoicing and extravagant demonstrations of respect. His landing at a port several hundred miles from the seat of government, was a singular move for a diplomat; but his object in so doing was soon evident. It is usual for a foreign minister to present his credentials to the government to which he comes, and be received by it in form before he presumes to enter upon the exercise of his functions. Citizen Genet, however, did not stop for these formalities. Confident in his

nature, heated in his zeal, and flushed with the popular warmth of his reception, he could not pause to consider the proprieties of his mission and the delicate responsibilities involved in diplomacy. The contiguity of Charleston to the West Indies made it a favorable port for fitting out privateers against the trade of these islands; and during Genet's short sojourn there he issued commissions for arming and equipping vessels of war for that purpose, and manning them with Americans.

In the latter part of April, Genet set out for the north by land. As he proceeded on his journey the newspapers teemed with accounts of the processions and addresses with which he was greeted, and the festivities which celebrated his arrival at each place. Jefferson, in a letter to Madison written from Philadelphia on the 5th of May, observes with exultation: "The war between France and England seems to be producing an effect not contemplated. All the old spirit of 1776, rekindling the newspapers from Boston to Charleston, proves this; and even the monocrat papers are obliged to publish the most furious philippics against England. A French frigate* took a British prize [the *Grange*] off the Capes of Delaware the other day, and sent her up here. Upon

* The *Ambuscade.*

her coming into sight, thousands and thousands of the *yeomanry* of the city crowded and covered the wharves. Never was there such a crowd seen there; and when the British colors were seen reversed, and the French flying above them, they burst into peals of exultation. I wish we may be able to repress the spirit of the people within the limits of a fair neutrality. . . . We expect Genet daily."

A friend of Hamilton writes in a different vein. Speaking of Genet, he observes: "He has a good person, a fine ruddy complexion, quite active, and seems always in a bustle, more like a busy man than a man of business. A Frenchman in his manners, he announces himself in all companies as the minister of the republic, etc., talks freely of his commission, and, like most Europeans, seems to have adopted mistaken notions of the penetration and knowledge of the people of the United States. His system, I think, is to laugh us into the war if he can."

On the 16th of May, Genet arrived at Philadelphia. His belligerent operations at Charleston had already been made a subject of complaint to the government by Mr. Hammond, the British minister; but they produced no abatement in the public enthusiasm. "It was suspected," writes Jefferson, "that there

was not a clear mind in the President's counsellors to receive Genet. The citizens, however, determined to receive him. Arrangements were taken for meeting him at Gray's Ferry, in a great body. He escaped that, by arriving in town with the letters which brought information that he was on the road." *

On the following day, various societies and a large body of citizens waited upon him with addresses, recalling with gratitude the aid given by France in the achievement of American independence, and extolling and rejoicing in the success of the arms of the French republic. On the same day, before Genet had presented his credentials and been acknowledged by the President, he was invited to a grand republican, dinner, 'at which," we are told, "the company united in singing the Marseilles Hymn. A deputation of French sailors presented themselves, and were received by the guests with the 'fraternal embrace,' The table was decorated with the 'tree of liberty,' and a red cap, called the cap of liberty, was placed on the head of the minister, and from his travelled in succession from head to head round the table." †

This enthusiasm of the multitude was re-

* Letter to Madison. *Works*, iii., 562.

† Jay's *Life*, vol. i., p. 301.

garded with indulgence, if not favor, by Jefferson, as being the effervescence of the true spirit of liberty; but was deprecated by Hamilton as an infatuation that might "do us much harm, and could do France no good." A letter, written by him at the time, is worthy of full citation as embodying the sentiments of that party of which he was the leader. "It cannot be without danger and inconvenience to our interests to impress on the nations of Europe an idea that we are actuated by the same spirit which has for some time past fatally misguided the measures of those who conduct the affairs of France, and sullied a cause once glorious, and that might have been triumphant. The cause of France is compared with that of America during its late Revolution. Would to Heaven that the comparison were just! Would to Heaven we could discern, in the mirror of French affairs, the same decorum, the same gravity, the same order, the same dignity, the same solemnity, which distinguished the cause of the American Revolution! Clouds and darkness would not then rest upon the issue as they now do. I own I do not like the comparison. When I contemplate the horrid and systematic massacres of the 2d and 3d of September; when I observe that a Marat and a Robespierre, the notorious prompters

of those bloody scenes, sit triumphantly in the convention, and take a conspicuous part in its measures—that an attempt to bring the assassins to justice has been obliged to be abandoned; when I see an unfortunate prince, whose reign was a continued demonstration of the goodness and benevolence of his heart, of his attachment to the people of whom he was the monarch, who, though educated in the lap of despotism, had given repeated proofs that he was not the enemy of liberty, brought precipitately and ignominiously to the block without any substantial proof of guilt, as yet disclosed—without even an authentic exhibition of motives, in decent regard to the opinions of mankind; when I find the doctrines of atheism openly advanced in the convention and heard with loud applauses; when I see the sword of fanaticism extended to force a political creed upon citizens who were invited to submit to the arms of France as the harbingers of liberty; when I behold the hand of rapacity outstretched to prostrate and ravish the monuments of religious worship, erected by those citizens and their ancestors; when I perceive passion, tumult, and violence usurping those seats where reason and cool deliberation ought to preside, I acknowledge that I am glad to believe there is no real resemblance between

what was the cause of America and what is the cause of France; that the difference is no less great than that between liberty and licentiousness. I regret whatever has a tendency to confound them, and I feel anxious, as an American, that the ebullitions of inconsiderate men among us may not tend to involve our reputation in the issue." *

Washington, from his elevated and responsible situation endeavored to look beyond the popular excitement, and regard the affairs of France with a dispassionate and impartial eye, but he confessed that he saw in the turn they had lately taken the probability of a terrible confusion, to which he could predict no certain issue: a boundless ocean whence no land was to be seen. He feared less, he said, for the cause of liberty in France from the pressure of foreign enemies, than from the strifes and quarrels of those in whose hands the government was intrusted, who were ready to tear each other to pieces, and would more probably prove the worst foes the country had.

* Hamilton's *Works*, v., 566.

Chapter XXVII.

Genet Presents his Letter of Credence—His Diplomatic Speech—Washington's Conversation with Jefferson—Capture of the Ship *Grange* and other British Vessels—Question of Restitution—Dissatisfaction of Genet—Demands Release of Two American Citizens—Washington's Sensitiveness to the Attacks of the Press—His Unshaken Determination.

ON the 18th of May, Genet presented his letter of credence to the President; by whom, notwithstanding his late unwarrantable proceedings at Charleston, he was well received; Washington taking the occasion to express his sincere regard for the French nation.

Jefferson, who, as Secretary of State, was present, had all his warm sympathies in favor of France, roused by Genet's diplomatic speech. "It was impossible," writes he to Madison, "for anything to be more affectionate, more magnanimous, than the purport

of Genet's mission. 'We wish you to do nothing,' said he, 'but what is for your own good, and we will do all in our power to promote it. Cherish your own peace and prosperity. You have expressed a willingness to enter into a more liberal commerce with us; I bring full powers to form such a treaty, and a preliminary decree of the National Convention to lay open our country and its colonies to you, for every purpose of utility, without your participating the burdens of maintaining and defending them. We see in you the only person on earth who can love us sincerely, and merit to be so loved.' In short he offers everything and asks nothing."

"Yet I know the offers will be opposed," adds Jefferson, "and suspect they will not be accepted. In short, my dear sir, it is impossible for you to conceive what is passing in our conclave; and it is evident that one or two, at least, under pretence of avoiding war on the one side, have no great antipathy to run foul of it on the other, and to make a part in the confederacy of princes against human liberty."

The "one or two," in the paragraph above cited, no doubt, imply Hamilton and Knox.

Washington again, in conversation, endeavored to counteract these suspicions which were swaying Jefferson's mind against his contem-

poraries. We give Jefferson's own account of the conversation. "He (Washington) observed that, if anybody wanted to change the form of our government into a monarchy, he was sure it was only a few individuals, and that no man in the United States would set his face against it more than himself; but that this was not what he was afraid of; his fears were from another quarter; that *there was more danger of anarchy being introduced.*"

He then adverted to Freneau's paper and its partisan hostilities. He despised, he said, all personal attacks upon himself, but observed that there never had been an act of government which that paper had not abused. "He was evidently sore and warm," adds Jefferson, "and I took his intention to be, that I should interpose in some way with Freneau; perhaps withdraw his appointment of translating clerk in my office. But I will not do it."

It appears to us rather an ungracious determination on the part of Jefferson, to keep this barking cur in his employ, when he found him so annoying to the chief, whom he professed, and we believe with sincerity, to revere. Neither are his reasons for so doing satisfactory, savoring, as they do, of those strong political suspicions already noticed. "His (Freneau's) paper," observed he, "has saved

our constitution, which was galloping fast into monarchy, and has been checked by no means so powerfully as by that paper. It is well and universally known, that it has been that paper which checked the career of the monocrats; the President, not sensible of the designs of the party, has not, with his usual good sense and *sang-froid*, looked on the efforts and effects of this free press, and seen that, though some bad things have passed through it to the public, yet the good have preponderated immensely." *

Jefferson was mistaken. Washington had regarded the efforts and effects of this free press with his usual good sense; and the injurious influence it exercised in public affairs was presently manifested in the transactions of the government with Genet. The acts of this diplomatic personage at Charleston, had not been the sole ground of the complaint preferred by the British minister. The capture of the British vessel, the *Grange*, by the frigate *Ambuscade*, formed a graver one. Occurring within our waters, it was a clear usurpation of national sovereignty, and a violation of neutral rights. The British minister demanded a restitution of the prize, and the cabinet were unanimously of opinion that restitution should be made; nor was there any difficulty with

* *Works*, ix., 143.

the French minister on this head; but restitution was likewise claimed of other vessels captured on the high seas, and brought into port by the privateers authorized by Genet. In regard to these there was a difference of sentiment in the cabinet. Hamilton and Knox were of opinion that the government should interpose to restore the prizes; it being the duty of a neutral nation to remedy any injury sustained by armaments fitted out in its ports. Jefferson and Randolph contended that the case should be left to the decision of the courts of justice. If the courts adjudged the commissions issued by Genet to be invalid, they would, of course, decide the captures made under them to be void, and the property to remain in the original owners; if, on the other hand, the legal right to the property had been transferred to the captors, they would so decide.

Seeing this difference of opinion in the cabinet, Washington reserved the point for further deliberation; but directed the Secretary of State to communicate to the ministers of France and Britain the principles in which they concurred; these being considered as settled. Circular letters, also were addressed to the governors of several States, requiring their co-operation, with force, if necessary, to carry out the rules agreed upon.

Genet took umbrage at these decisions of the government, and expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter, complaining of them as violations of natural right, and subversive of the existing treaties between the two nations. His letter, though somewhat wanting in strict decorum of language, induced a review of the subject in the cabinet; and he was informed that no reason appeared for changing the system adopted. He was further informed that in the opinion of the Executive, the vessels which had been illegally equipped, should depart from the ports of the United States.

Genet was not disposed to acquiesce in these decisions. He was aware of the grateful feelings of the nation to France; of the popular disposition to go all lengths short of war, in her favor; of the popular idea, that republican interests were identical on both sides of the Atlantic; that a royal triumph over republicanism in Europe, would be followed by a combination to destroy it in this country. He had heard the clamor among the populace, and uttered in Freneau's *Gazette* and other newspapers, against the policy of neutrality; the people, he thought, were with him, if Washington was not, and he believed the latter would not dare to risk his popularity in thwarting their enthusiasm. He persisted, therefore,

in disregarding the decisions of the government, and spoke of them as a departure from the obligations it owed to France; a cowardly abandonment of friends when danger menaced.

Another event added to the irritation of Genet. Two American citizens, whom he had engaged at Charleston, to cruise in the service of France, were arrested on board of the privateer, conducted to prison, and prosecutions commenced against them. The indignant feelings of Genet were vented in an extraordinary letter to the Secretary of State. When speaking of their arrest, "The crime laid to their charge," writes he—"the crime which my mind cannot conceive, and which my pen almost refuses to state—is the serving of France, and defending with her children the common glorious cause of liberty.

"Being ignorant of any positive law or treaty which deprives Americans of this privilege, and authorizes officers of police arbitrarily to take mariners in the service of France from on board of their vessels, I call upon your intervention, sir, and that of the President of the United States, in order to obtain the immediate releasement of the above-mentioned officers, who have acquired, by the sentiments animating them, and by the act of their engagement, anterior to any act to the contrary, the right

of French citizens, if they have lost that of American citizens."

The lofty and indignant tone of this letter had no effect in shaking the determination of government, or obtaining the release of the prisoners. Washington confesses, however, that he was very much harried and perplexed by the "disputes, memorials, and what not," with which he was pestered, by one or other of the powers at war. It was a sore trial of his equanimity, his impartiality, and his discrimination, and wore upon his spirits and his health. "The President is not well," writes Jefferson to Madison (June 9th); "little lingering fevers have been hanging about him for a week or ten days, and affected his looks most remarkably. He is also extremely affected by the attacks made and kept up on him, in the public papers. I think he feels these things more than any other person I ever yet met with. I am sincerely sorry to see them."

Jefferson's sorrow was hardly in accordance with the resolution expressed by him, to retain Freneau in his office, notwithstanding his incessant attacks upon the President and the measures of his government. Washington might well feel sensitive to these attacks, which Jefferson acknowledges were the more mischievous, from being planted on popular ground,

on the universal love of the people to France and its cause. But he was not to be deterred by personal considerations from the strict line of his duty. He was aware that, in withstanding the public infatuation in regard to France, he was putting an unparalleled popularity at hazard; but he put it at hazard without hesitation; and, in so doing, set a magnanimous example for his successors in office to endeavor to follow.

Chapter XXVII.

Washington Called to Mount Vernon—The Case of the *Little Sarah* Comes up in his Absence—Governor Mifflin Determined to Prevent her Departure—Rage of Genet—Jefferson Urges Detention of the Privateer until the President's Return—Evasive Assurance of Genet—Distrust of Hamilton and Knox—Washington Returns to Philadelphia—A Cabinet Council—Its Determination Communicated to Genet—The Vessel Sails in Defiance of it—Formation of the Democratic Society—The Recall of Genet Determined on—The Ribald Lampoon—Washington's Outburst.

IN the latter part of July, Washington was suddenly called to Mount Vernon by the death of Mr. Whiting, the manager of his estates. During his brief absence from the seat of government occurred the case of the *Little Sarah*. This was a British merchant vessel which had been captured by a French privateer, and brought into Philadel-

phia, where she had been armed and equipped for privateering; manned with one hundred and twenty men, many of them Americans, and her name changed into that of *Le Petit Democrat*. This, of course, was in violation of Washington's decision, which had been communicated to Genet.

General Mifflin, now governor of Pennsylvania, being informed, on the 6th of July, that the vessel was to sail the next day, sent his secretary, Mr. Dallas, at midnight to Genet, to persuade him to detain her until the President should arrive, intimating that otherwise force would be used to prevent her departure.

Genet flew into one of the transports of passion to which he was prone; contrasted the treatment experienced by him from the officers of government, with the attachment to his nation professed by the people at large; declared that the President was not the sovereign of the country, and had no right, without consulting Congress, to give such instructions as he had issued to the State governors; threatened to appeal from his decision to the people, and to repel force by force, should an attempt be made to seize the privateer.

Apprised of this menace, Governor Mifflin forthwith ordered out one hundred and twenty of the militia to take possession of the privateer,

and communicated the circumstances of the case to the cabinet.

Mr. Jefferson now took the matter in hand, and, on the 7th of July, in an interview with Genet, repeated the request that the privateer be detained until the arrival of the President. Genet, he writes, instantly took up the subject in a very high tone, and went into an immense field of declamation and complaint. Jefferson made a few efforts to be heard, but, finding them ineffectual, suffered the torrent of vituperation to pour on. He sat in silence, therefore, while Genet charged the government with having violated the treaties between the two nations; with having suffered its flag to be insulted and disregarded by the English; who stopped its vessels on the high seas, and took out of them whatever they suspected to be French property. He declared that he had been thwarted and opposed in everything he had to do with the government; so that he sometimes thought of packing up and going away, as he found he could not be useful to his nation in anything. He censured the Executive for the measures it had taken without consulting Congress, and declared, that, on the President's return, he would certainly press him to convene that body.

He had by this time exhausted his passion and moderated his tone, and Jefferson took

occasion to say a word. "I stopped him," writes he, "at the subject of calling Congress; explained our Constitution to him as having divided the functions of government among three different authorities, the executive, legislative, and judiciary, each of which were supreme on all questions belonging to their department, and independent of the others; that all the questions which had arisen between him and us, belonged to the executive department, and, if Congress were sitting, could not be carried to them, nor would they take notice of them."

Genet asked with surprise, if Congress were not the sovereign.

"No," replied Jefferson. "They are sovereign only in making laws; the executive is the sovereign in executing them, and the judiciary in construing them, where they relate to that department."

"But at least," cried Genet, "Congress are bound to see that the treaties are observed."

"No," rejoined Jefferson. "There are very few cases, indeed, arising out of treaties, which they can take notice of. The President is to see that treaties are observed."

"If he decides against the treaty," demanded Genet, "to whom is a nation to appeal?"

"The Constitution," replied Jefferson, "has made the President the last appeal."

Genet, perfectly taken aback at finding his own ignorance in the matter, shrugged his shoulders, made a bow, and said, "he would not compliment Mr. Jefferson on such a Constitution."

He had now subsided into coolness and good humor, and the subject of the *Little Sarah* being resumed, Jefferson pressed her detention until the President's return; intimating that her previous departure would be considered a very serious offense.

Genet made no promise, but expressed himself very happy to be able to inform Mr. Jefferson that the vessel was not in a state of readiness; she had to change her position that day, he said, and fall down the river, somewhere about the lower end of the town, for the convenience of taking some things on board, and would not depart yet.

When Jefferson endeavored to extort an assurance that she would await the President's return, he evaded a direct committal, intimating however, by look and gesture, that she would not be gone before that time. "But let me beseech you," said he, "not to permit any attempt to put men on board of her. She is filled with high-spirited patriots, and they will unquestionably resist. And there is no occasion, for I tell you she will not be ready to depart for some time."

Jefferson was accordingly impressed with the belief that the privateer would remain in the river until the President should decide on her case, and, on communicating this conviction to the governor, the latter ordered the militia to be dismissed.

Hamilton and Knox, on the other hand, were distrustful, and proposed the immediate erection of a battery on Mud Island, with guns mounted to fire at the vessel, and even to sink her, if she attempted to pass. Jefferson, however, refusing to concur in the measure, it was not adopted. The vessel, at that time, was at Gloucester Point, but soon fell down to Chester.

Washington arrived at Philadelphia on the 11th of July; when papers requiring "instant attention" were put into his hands. They related to the case of the *Little Sarah*, and were from Jefferson, who, being ill with fever, had retired to his seat in the country. Nothing could exceed the displeasure of Washington when he examined these papers.

In a letter written to Jefferson, on the spur of the moment, he puts these indignant queries: "What is to be done in the case of the *Little Sarah*, now at Chester? Is the minister of the French republic to set the acts of this government at defiance *with impunity?* And then threaten the executive with an appeal to the

people! What must the world think of such conduct, and of the government of the United States in submitting to it?

"These are serious questions. Circumstances press for decision, and, as you have had time to consider them (upon me they come unexpectedly), I wish to know your opinion upon them, even before to-morrow, for the vessel may then be gone."

Mr. Jefferson, in a reply of the same date, informed the President of his having received assurance, that day, from Mr. Genet, that the vessel would not be gone before his (the President's) decision.

In consequence of this assurance of the French minister, no immediate measures of a coercive nature were taken with regard to the vessel; but in a cabinet council held the next day, it was determined to detain in port all privateers which had been equipped within the United States by any of the belligerent powers.

No time was lost in communicating this determination to Genet; but, in defiance of it, the vessel sailed on her cruise.

It must have been a severe trial to Washington's spirit to see his authority thus braved and insulted, and to find that the people, notwithstanding the indignity thus offered to their chief magistrate, sided with the aggressors,

and exulted in their open defiance of his neutral policy.

About this time a society was formed under the auspices of the French minister, and in imitation of the Jacobin clubs of Paris. It was called the Democratic Society, and soon gave rise to others throughout the Union; all taking the French side in the present questions. The term democrat, thenceforward, began to designate an ultra-republican.

Fresh mortifications awaited Washington, from the distempered state of public sentiment. The trial came on of Gideon Henfield, an American citizen, prosecuted under the advice of the Attorney-general, for having enlisted, at Charleston, on board of a French privateer which had brought prizes into the port of Philadelphia. The populace took part with Henfield. He had enlisted before the proclamation of neutrality had been published, and even if he had enlisted at a later date, was he to be punished for engaging with their ancient ally, France, in the cause of liberty against the royal despots of Europe? His acquittal exposed Washington to the obloquy of having attempted a measure which the laws would not justify. It showed him, moreover, the futility of attempts at punishment for infractions of the rules proclaimed for the preservation of

neutrality; while the clamorous rejoicing by which the acquittal of Henfield had been celebrated, evinced the popular disposition to thwart that line of policy which he considered most calculated to promote the public good. Nothing, however, could induce him to swerve from that policy. "I have consolation within," said he, "that no earthly effort can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambitious nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, can never reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am set up as a *mark* they will be continually aimed." *

Hitherto Washington had exercised great forbearance toward the French minister, notwithstanding the little respect shown by the latter to the rights of the United States; but the official communications of Genet were becoming too offensive and insulting to be longer tolerated. Meetings of the heads of departments and the attorney-general were held at the President's on the 1st and 2d of August, in which the whole of the official correspondence and conduct of Genet was passed in review; and it was agreed that his recall should be desired. Jefferson recommended

* Letter to Gov. Lee. Sparks, x., 359.

that the desire should be expressed with great delicacy; the others were for peremptory terms. Knox was for sending him off at once, but this proposition was generally scouted. In the end it was agreed that a letter should be written to Gouverneur Morris, giving a statement of the case, with accompanying documents, that he might lay the whole before the executive council of France, and explain the reason for desiring the recall of Mr. Genet.

It was proposed that a publication of the whole correspondence, and a statement of the proceedings, should be made by way of appeal to the people. This produced animated debates. Hamilton spoke with great warmth in favor of an appeal. Jefferson opposed it. "Genet," said he, "will appeal also; it will become a contest between the President and Genet. Anonymous writers will take it up. There will be the same difference of opinion in *public* as in our cabinet—there will be the same difference in *Congress*, for it must be laid before them. It would work, therefore, very unpleasantly *at home*. How would it work *abroad?*"

Washington, already weary and impatient, under the incessant dissensions of his cabinet, was stung by the suggestion that he might be held up as in conflict with Genet, and subjected,

as he had been, to the ribaldry of the press. At this unlucky moment Knox blundered forth with a specimen of the scandalous libels already in circulation, a pasquinade lately printed, called the *Funeral of George Washington* wherein the President was represented as placed upon a guillotine, a horrible parody on the late decapitation of the French king. "The President," writes Jefferson, "now burst forth into one of those transports of passion beyond his control; inveighed against the personal abuse which had been bestowed upon him, and defied any man on earth to produce a single act of his since he had been in the government that had not been done on the purest motives.

"He had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office and that was every moment since. In the agony of his heart he declared that he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made emperor of the world—and yet, said he, indignantly, they are charging me with wanting to be a king!

"All were silent during this burst of feeling—a pause ensued—it was difficult to resume the question. Washington, however, who had recovered his equanimity, put an end to the difficulty. There was no necessity, he said,

for deciding the matter at present; the propositions agreed to, respecting the letter to Mr. Morris, might be put into a train of execution, and perhaps events would show whether the appeal would be necessary or not,'' *

* Jefferson's *Works*, ix., 164.

Chapter XXVIII.

Threatened Dissolution of the Cabinet—Action between the *Ambuscade* and *Boston*—Triumphant Return of the Former to New York—A French Fleet Arrives Same Day—Excitement of the People—Genet arrives in the Midst of it—His Enthusiatic Reception—Is Informed by Jefferson of the Measures for his Recall—His Rage and Reply—Decline of his Popularity.

WASHINGTON had hitherto been annoyed and perplexed by having to manage a divided cabinet; he was now threatened with that cabinet's dissolution. Mr. Hamilton had informed him by letter, that private as well as public reasons had determined him to retire from office towards the close of the next session: probably with a view to give Congress an opportunity to examine into his conduct. Now came a letter from Mr. Jefferson, dated July 31st, in which he recalled the circumstances which had induced him to postpone for a while

his original intention of retiring from office at the close of the first four years of the republic. These circumstances, he observed, had now ceased to such a degree as to leave him free to think again of a day on which to withdraw; "at the close, therefore, of the ensuing month of September, I shall beg leave to retire to scenes of greater tranquillity, from those for which I am every day more and more convinced that neither my talents, tone of mind, nor time of life fit me."

Washington was both grieved and embarrassed by this notification. Full of concern, he called upon Jefferson at his country residence near Philadelphia; pictured his deep distress at finding himself, in the present perplexing juncture of affairs, about to be deserted by those of his cabinet on whose counsel he had counted, and whose places he knew not where to find persons competent to supply; and, in his chagrin, again expressed his repentance that he himself had not resigned as he had once meditated.

The public mind, he went on to observe, was in an alarming state of ferment; political combinations of various kinds were forming; where all this would end he knew not. A new Congress was to assemble, more numerous than the last, perhaps of a different spirit; the first

expressions of its sentiments would be important, and it would relieve him considerably if Jefferson would remain in office, if it were only until the end of the session.

Jefferson, in reply, pleaded an excessive repugnance to public life; and what seems to have influenced him more sensibly, the actual uneasiness of his position. He was obliged he said, to move in exactly the circle which he knew to bear him peculiar hatred; "the wealthy aristocrats, the merchants connected closely with England; the newly-created paper fortunes." Thus surrounded, his words were caught, multiplied, misconstrued, and even fabricated, and spread abroad to his injury.

Mr. Jefferson pleaded, moreover, that the opposition of views between Mr. Hamilton and himself was peculiarly unpleasant, and destructive of the necessary harmony. With regard to the republican party he was sure it had not a view which went to the frame of the government; he believed the next Congress would attempt nothing material but to render their own body independent: the manœuvres of Mr. Genet might produce some little embarrassment, but the republicans would abandon that functionary the moment they knew the nature of his conduct.

Washington replied, that he believed the

views of the republican party to be perfectly pure: "but when men put a machine into motion," said he, "it is impossible for them to stop it exactly where they would choose, or to say where it will stop. The Constitution we have is an excellent one, if we can keep it where it is."

He again adverted to Jefferson's constant suspicion that there was a party disposed to change the Constitution into a monarchical form, declaring that there was not a man in the United States who would set his face more decidedly against such a change than himself.

"No rational man in the United States suspects you of any other disposition," cried Jefferson; "but there does not pass a week in which we cannot prove declarations dropping from the monarchical party, that our government is good for nothing; is a milk-and-water thing which cannot support itself; that we must knock it down and set up something with more energy."

"If that is the case," rejoined Washington, "it is a proof of their insanity, for the republican spirit of the Union is so manifest and so solid that it is astonishing how any one can expect to move it."

We have only Jefferson's account of this and other interesting interviews of a confidential

nature which he had with the President, and we give them generally almost in his own words, through which, partial as they may have been, we discern Washington's constant efforts to moderate the growing antipathies between the eminent men whom he had sought to assist him in conducting the government. He continued to have the highest opinion of Jefferson's abilities, his knowledge of foreign affairs, his thorough patriotism; and it was his earnest desire to retain him in his cabinet through the whole of the ensuing session of Congress; before the close of which he trusted the affairs of the country relating to foreign powers, Indian disturbances, and internal policy, would have taken a more decisive, and it was to be hoped agreeable form than they then had. A compromise was eventually made, according to which Jefferson was to be allowed a temporary absence in the autumn, and on his return was to continue in office till January.

In the meantime Genet had proceeded to New York, which very excitable city was just then in a great agitation. The frigate *Ambuscade*, while anchored in the harbor, had been challenged to single combat by the British frigate *Boston*, Captain Courtney, which was cruising off the Hook. The challenge was accepted; a severe action ensued; Courtney

was killed; and the *Boston*, much damaged, was obliged to stand for Halifax. The *Ambuscade* returned triumphant to New York, and entered the port amid the enthusiastic cheers of the populace. On the same day, a French fleet of fifteen sail arrived from the Chesapeake and anchored in the Hudson River. The officers and crews were objects of unbounded favor with all who inclined to the French cause. Bompard, the commander of the *Ambuscade*, was the hero of the day. Tri-colored cockades, and tri-colored ribbons were to be seen on every side, and rude attempts to chant the Marseilles Hymn and the Carmagnole resounded through the streets.

In the midst of this excitement, the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon announced that Citizen Genet was arrived at Powles Hook Ferry, directly opposite the city. There was an immediate assemblage of the republican party in the fields now called the Park. A committee was appointed to escort Genet into the city. He entered it amid the almost frantic cheerings of the populace. Addresses were made to him, expressing devoted attachment to the French republic, and abjuring all neutrality in regard to its heroic struggle. "The cause of France is the cause of America," cried the enthusiasts, "it is time to distinguish

its friends from its foes." Genet looked round him. The tri-colored cockade figured in the hats of the shouting multitude; tri-colored ribbons fluttered from the dresses of females in the windows; the French flag was hoisted on the top of the Tontine Coffee House (the City Exchange), surmounted by the cap of liberty. Can we wonder that what little discretion Genet possessed was completely overborne by this tide of seeming popularity?

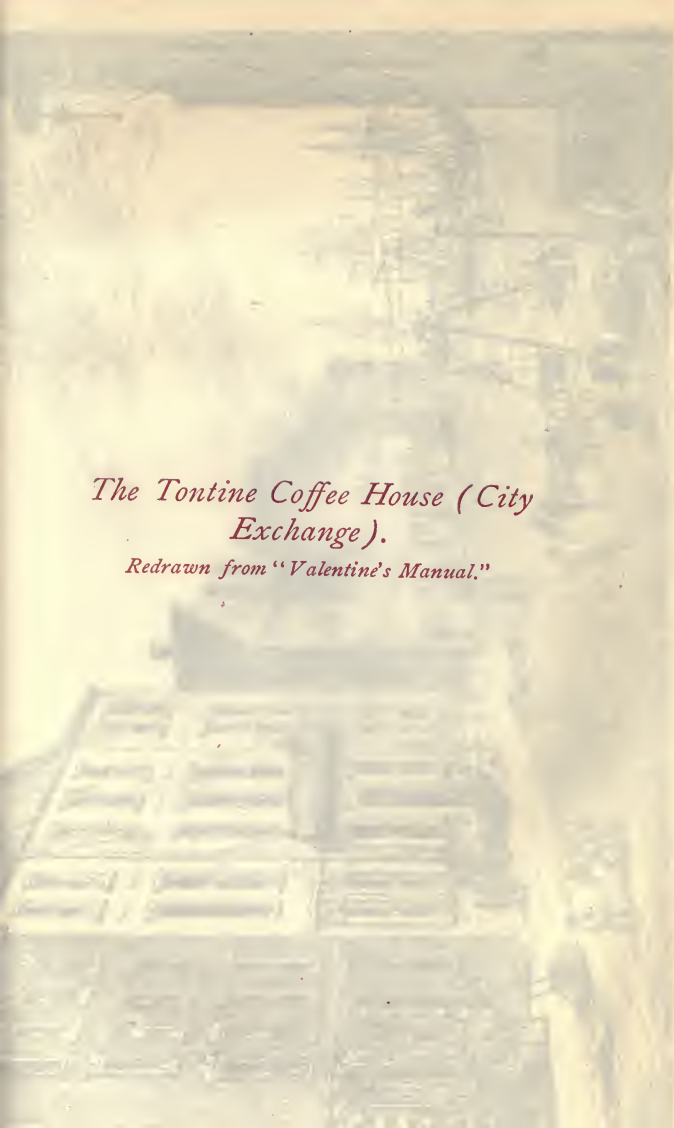
In the midst of his self-gratulation and complacency, however, he received a letter from Mr. Jefferson (September 15th), acquainting him with the measures taken to procure his recall, and inclosing a copy of the letter written for that purpose to the American minister at Paris. It was added that, out of anxious regard lest the interests of France might suffer, the Executive would, in the meantime, receive his (M. Genet's) communications in writing, and admit the continuance of his functions so long as they should be restrained within the law as theretofore announced to him, and should be of the tenor usually observed towards independent nations, by the representative of a friendly power residing with them.

The letter of the Secretary of State threw Genet into a violent passion, and produced a reply (September 18th), written while he was

still in great heat. In this he attributed his disfavor with the American government to the machinations of "those gentlemen who had so often been represented to him as aristocrats, partisans of monarchy, partisans of England and her constitution, and consequently enemies of the principles which all good Frenchmen had embraced with religious enthusiasm." "These persons," he said, "alarmed by the popularity which the zeal of the American people for the cause of France had shed upon her minister; alarmed also by his inflexible and incorruptible attachment to the severe maxims of democracy, were striving to ruin him in his own country, after having united all their efforts to calumniate him in the minds of their fellow-citizens."

"These people," observes he, "instead of a democratic ambassador, would prefer a minister of the ancient regime, very complaisant, very gentle, very disposed to pay court to people in office, to conform blindly to everything which flattered their views and projects; above all, to prefer to the sure and modest society of good farmers, simple citizens, and honest artisans, that of distinguished personages who speculate so patriotically in the public funds, in the lands, and the paper of government."

In his heat, Genet resented the part Mr.



The Tontine Coffee House (City Exchange).

Redrawn from "Valentine's Manual."

Jefferson had taken, notwithstanding their cordial intimacy, in the present matter, although this part had merely been the discharge of an official duty. "Whatever, sir," writes Genet, "may be the result of the exploit of which you have rendered yourself the generous instrument, after having made me believe that you were my friend, after having initiated me in the mysteries which have influenced my hatred against all those who aspire to absolute power, there is an act of justice which the American people, which the French people, which all free people are interested in demanding; it is, that a particular inquiry should be made, in the approaching Congress, into the motives which have induced the chief of the executive power of the United States to take upon himself to demand the recall of a public minister, whom the sovereign people of the United States had received fraternally and recognized, before the diplomatic forms had been fulfilled in respect to him at Philadelphia."

The wrongs of which Genet considered himself entitled to complain against the Executive, commenced before his introduction to that functionary. It was the proclamation of neutrality which first grieved his spirit. "I was extremely wounded," writes he, "that the President of the United States should haste,

before knowing what I had to transmit on the part of the French republic, to proclaim sentiments over which decency and friendship should at least have thrown a veil."

He was grieved, moreover, that on his first audience, the President had spoken only of the friendship of the United States for France, without uttering a word or expressing a single sentiment in regard to its revolution, although all the towns, all the villages from Charleston to Philadelphia, had made the air resound with their ardent voices for the French republic. And what further grieved his spirit was, to observe "that this first magistrate of a free people had decorated his saloon with certain medallions of Capet [meaning Louis XVI.] and his family, which served in France for rallying signs."

We forbear to cite further this angry and ill-judged letter. Unfortunately for Genet's ephemeral popularity, a rumor got abroad that he had expressed a determination to appeal from the President to the people. This at first was contradicted, but was ultimately established by a certificate of Chief Justice Jay and Mr. Rufus King of the United States Senate, which was published in the papers.

The spirit of audacity thus manifested by a foreign minister shocked the national pride.

Meetings were held in every part of the Union to express the public feeling in the matter. In these meetings the proclamation of neutrality and the system of measures flowing from it, were sustained, partly from a conviction of their wisdom and justice, but more from an undiminished affection for the person and character of Washington; for many who did not espouse his views were ready to support him in the exercise of his constitutional functions. The warm partisans of Genet, however, were the more vehement in his support from the temporary ascendency of the other party. They advocated his right to appeal from the President to the people. The President, they argued, was invested with no sanctity to make such an act criminal. In a republican country the people were the real sovereigns.

Chapter XXIX.

Neutrality Endangered by Great Britain—Her Ill-Advised Measures—Detention of Vessels Bound for France—Impressment of American Seamen—Persistence in Holding the Western Posts—Congress Assembles in December—The President's Opening Speech—His Censure of Genet—The Vice-President's Allusion to it—The Administration in a Minority in the House—Proclamation of Neutrality Sustained—Jefferson's Report—Retires from the Cabinet—His Parting Rebuke to Genet—His Character of Washington.

WHILE the neutrality of the United States, so jealously guarded by Washington, was endangered by the intrigues of the French minister, it was put to imminent hazard by ill-advised measures of the British cabinet.

There was such a scarcity in France, in consequence of the failure of the crops, that a famine was apprehended. England, availing herself of her naval ascendency, determined to

increase the distress of her rival by cutting off all her supplies from abroad. In June, 1793, therefore, her cruisers were instructed to detain all vessels bound to France with cargoes of corn, flour, or meal, take them into port, unload them, purchase the cargoes, make a proper allowance for the freight, and then release the vessels; or to allow the masters of them, on a stipulated security, to dispose of their cargoes in a port in amity with England. This measure gave umbrage to all parties in the United States, and brought out an earnest remonstrance from the government, as being a violation of the law of neutrals, and indefensible on any proper construction of the law of nations.

Another grievance which helped to swell the tide of resentment against Great Britain, was the frequent impressment of American seamen, a wrong to which they were particularly exposed from national similarity.

To these may be added the persistence of Great Britain in holding the posts to the south of the lakes, which, according to treaty stipulations, ought to have been given up. Washington did not feel himself in a position to press our rights under the treaty, with the vigorous hand that some would urge; questions having risen in some of the State courts, to obstruct the fulfilment of our part of it,

which regarded the payment of British debts contracted before the war.

The violent partisans of France thought nothing of these shortcomings on our own part, and would have had the forts seized at once; but Washington considered a scrupulous discharge of our own obligations the necessary preliminary, should so violent a measure be deemed advisable. His prudent and conscientious conduct in this particular, so in unison with the impartial justice which governed all his actions, was cited by partisan writers as indicative of his preference of England to "our ancient ally."

The hostilities of the Indians north of the Ohio, by many attributed to British wiles, still continued. The attempts at an amicable negotiation had proved as fruitless as Washington had anticipated. The troops under Wayne had, therefore, taken the field to act offensively; but from the lateness of the season, had formed a winter camp near the site of the present city of Cincinnati, whence Wayne was to open his campaign in the ensuing spring.

Congress assembled on the 2d of December (1793), with various causes of exasperation at work; the intrigues of Genet and the aggressions of England, uniting to aggravate to a degree of infatuation the partiality for France,

and render imminent the chance of a foreign war.

Washington, in his opening speech, after expressing his deep and respectful sense of the renewed testimony of public approbation manifested in his re-election, proceeded to state the measures he had taken, in consequence of the war in Europe, to protect the rights and interests of the United States, and maintain peaceful relations with the belligerent parties. Still he pressed upon Congress the necessity of placing the country in a condition of complete defense. "The United States," said he, "ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will forever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace —one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity—it must be known that we are, at all times, ready for war." In the spirit of these remarks, he urged measures to increase the amount of arms and ammunition in the arsenals, and to improve the militia establishment.

One part of his speech conveyed an impressive admonition to the House of Representatives: "No pecuniary consideration is more urgent than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt; in none can delay be more injurious, or an economy of time more valuable."

The necessity of augmenting the public revenue in a degree commensurate with the objects suggested, was likewise touched upon.

In concluding his speech, he endeavored to impress upon his hearers the magnitude of their task, the important interests confided to them, and the conscientiousness that should reign over their deliberations. "Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of sentiment, its dignity may be lost. But, as the legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper or of candor, so shall not the public happiness languish from the want of my strenuous and warmest co-operation."

In a message to both Houses, on the 5th of December, concerning foreign relations, Washington spoke feelingly with regard to those with the representative and executive bodies of France: "It is with extreme concern I have

to inform you that the proceedings of the person whom they have unfortunately appointed their minister plenipotentiary here, have breathed nothing of the friendly spirit of the nation which sent him; their tendency, on the contrary, has been to involve us in war abroad, and discord and anarchy at home. So far as his acts, or those of his agents, have threatened our immediate commitment in the war, or flagrant insult to the authority of the laws, their effect has been counteracted by the ordinary cognizance of the laws, and by an exertion of the powers confided to me. Where their danger was not imminent, they have been borne with, from sentiments of regard for his nation; from a sense of their friendship towards us; from a conviction, that they would not suffer us to remain long exposed to the action of a person who has so little respected our mutual dispositions; and, I will add, from a reliance on the firmness of my fellow-citizens in their principles of peace and order."

John Adams, speaking of this passage of the message, says: "The President has given Genet a bolt of thunder." He questioned, however, whether Washington would be supported in it by the two Houses—"although he stands at present as high in the admiration and confidence of the people as ever he did, I

expect he will find many bitter and desperate enemies arise in consequence of his just judgment against Genet." *

In fact, the choice of the speaker showed that there was a majority of ten against the administration in the House of Representatives; yet it was manifest, from the affectionate answer on the 6th, of the two Houses, to Washington's speech, and the satisfaction expressed at his re-election, that he was not included in the opposition which, from this act, appeared to await his political system. The House did justice to the purity and patriotism of the motives which had prompted him again to obey the voice of his country, when called by it to the presidential chair. "It is to virtues which have commanded long and universal reverence, and services from which have flowed great and lasting benefits, that the tribute of praise may be paid, without the reproach of flattery; and it is from the same sources that the fairest anticipations may be derived in favor of the public happiness."

Notwithstanding the popular ferment in favor of France, both Houses seem to have approved the course pursued by Washington in regard to that country; and as to his proclamation of neutrality, while the House ap-

* Letter to Mrs. Adams. *Life*, vol., i. p. 460.

proved of it in guarded terms, the Senate pronounced it a "measure well-timed and wise; manifesting a watchful solicitude for the welfare of the nation, and calculated to promote it."

Early in the session, Mr. Jefferson, in compliance with a requisition which the House of Representatives had made, February 23, 1791, furnished an able and comprehensive report of the state of trade of the United States with different countries; the nature and extent of exports and imports, and the amount of tonnage of the American shipping; specifying, also, the various restrictions and prohibitions by which our commerce was embarrassed, and, in some instances, almost ruined. "Two methods," he said, "presented themselves, by which these impediments might be removed, modified, or counteracted; friendly arrangement or countervailing legislation. Friendly arrangements were preferable with all who would come into them, and we should carry into such arrangements all the liberality and spirit of accommodation which the nature of the case would admit. But," he adds, "should any nation continue its system of prohibitive duties and regulations, it behooves us to protect our citizens, their commerce, and navigation, by counter prohibitions, duties, and regula-

tions." To effect this, he suggested a series of legislative measures of a retaliatory kind."*

With this able and elaborate report, Jefferson closed his labors as Secretary of State. His last act was a kind of parting gun to Mr. Genet. This restless functionary had, on the 20th of December, sent to him translations of the instructions given him by the executive council of France; desiring that the President would lay them officially before both Houses of Congress, and proposing to transmit successively other papers, to be laid before them in like manner.

Jefferson, on the 31st of December, informed Genet that he had laid his letter and its accompaniments before the President. "I have it in charge to observe," adds he, "that your functions as the missionary of a foreign nation here, are confined to the transactions of the affairs of your nation with the Executive of the United States; that the communications which are to pass between the executive and legislative branches cannot be a subject for your interference; and that the President must be left to judge for himself what matters his duty or the public good may require him to propose to the deliberations of Congress. I have, therefore, the honor of returning you the

* See Jefferson's *Works*, vol. iii.

copies sent for distribution, and of being, with great respect, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant."

Such was Jefferson's dignified rebuke of the presumptuous meddling of Genet, and indeed his whole course of official proceedings with that minister, notwithstanding his personal intimacy with him and his strong French partialities, is worthy of the highest approbation. Genet, in fact, who had calculated on Jefferson's friendship, charged him openly with having a language official and a language confidential, but it certainly was creditable to him, as a public functionary in a place of high trust, that, in his official transactions, he could rise superior to individual prejudices and partialities, and consult only the dignity and interests of his country.

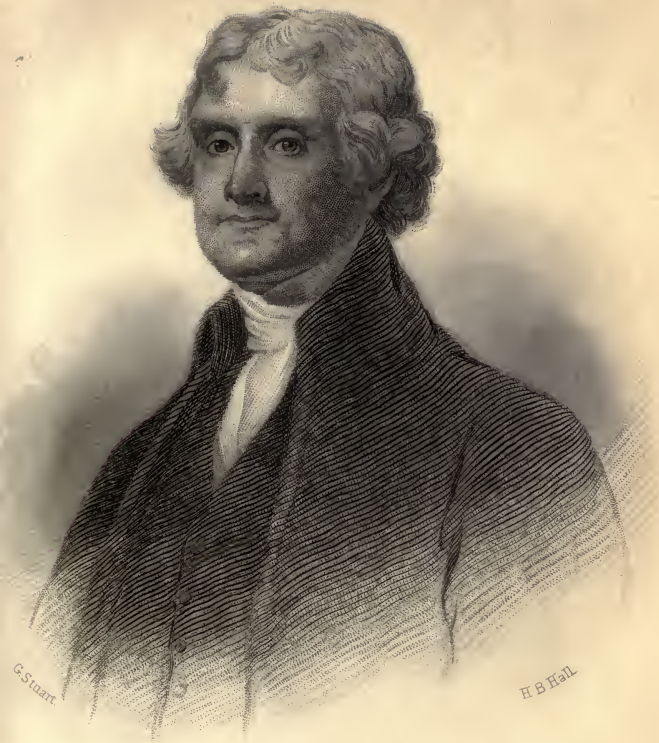
Washington had been especially sensible of the talents and integrity displayed by Jefferson during the closing year of his secretaryship, and particularly throughout this French perplexity, and had recently made a last attempt, but an unsuccessful one, to persuade him to remain in the cabinet. On the same day with his letter to Genet, Jefferson addressed one to Washington, reminding him of his having postponed his retirement from office until the end of the annual year. "That term being

now arrived," writes he, "and my propensities to retirement becoming daily more and more irresistible, I now take the liberty of resigning the office into your hands. Be pleased to accept with it my sincere thanks for all the indulgencies which you have been so good as to exercise towards me in the discharge of its duties. Conscious that my need of them has been great, I have still ever found them greater, without any other claim on my part than a firm pursuit of what has appeared to me to be right, and a thorough disdain of all means which were not as open and honorable as their object was pure. I carry into my retirement a lively sense of your goodness, and shall continue gratefully to remember it."

The following was Washington's reply: "Since it has been impossible to prevent you to forego any longer the indulgence of your desire for private life, the event, however anxious I am to avert it, must be submitted to.

"But I cannot suffer you to leave your station without assuring you, that the opinion which I had formed of your integrity and talents, and which dictated your original nomination, has been confirmed by the fullest experience, and that both have been eminently displayed in the discharge of your duty."

Thomas Jefferson.
From a painting by G. Stuart.


G. Stuart
H B Hall

The place thus made vacant in the cabinet was filled by Mr. Edmund Randolph, whose office of attorney-general was conferred on Mr. William Bradford of Pennsylvania.

No one seemed to throw off the toils of office with more delight than Jefferson; or to betake himself with more devotion to the simple occupations of rural life. It was his boast, in a letter to a friend written some time after his return to Monticello, that he had seen no newspaper since he had left Philadelphia, and he believed he should never take another newspaper of any sort. "I think it is Montaigne." writes he, "who has said, that ignorance is the softest pillow on which a man can rest his head. I am sure it is true as to everything political, and shall endeavor to estrange myself to everything of that character." Yet the very next sentence shows the lurking of the old party feud. "I indulge myself in one political topic only—that is, in declaring to my countrymen the shameless corruption of a portion of the representatives of the first and second Congresses, *and their implicit devotion to the treasury*." *

We subjoin his comprehensive character of Washington, the result of long observation and cabinet experience, and written in after years,

* Letter to E. Randolph. *Works*, iv., 103.

when there was no temptation to insincere eulogy:

"His integrity was most pure; his justice the most inflexible I have ever known; no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the word, a wise, a good, and a great man."

Chapter XXX.

Debate on Jefferson's Report on Commercial Intercourse—A Naval Force Proposed for the Protection of Commerce against Piratical Cruisers—Further Instances of the Audacity of Genet—His Recall—Arrival of his Successor—Irritation Excited by British Captures of American Vessels—Preparations for Defense—Embargo—Intense Excitement at "British Spoliations"—Partisans of France in the Ascendant—A Chance for Accommodating Difficulties—Jefferson's Hopes of Reconciliation—The War Cry Uppermost—Washington Determines to send a Special Envoy to the British Government—Jefferson's Letter to Tench Coxe.

PUPLIC affairs were becoming more and more complicated, and events in Europe were full of gloomy portent. "The news of this evening," writes John Adams to his wife, on the 9th of January, "is, that the queen of France is no more. When will savages be satisfied with blood? No prospect of peace in Europe, therefore none

of internal harmony in America. We cannot well be in a more disagreeable situation than we are with all Europe, with all Indians, and with all Barbary rovers. Nearly one half of the continent is in constant opposition to the other, and the President's situation, which is highly responsible, is very distressing."

Adams speaks of having had two hours' conversation with Washington alone in his cabinet, but intimates that he could not reveal the purport of it, even by a hint; it had satisfied him, however, of Washington's earnest desire to do right; his close application to discover it, and his deliberate and comprehensive view of our affairs with all the world. "The anti-federalists and the Frenchified zealots," adds Adams, "have nothing now to do that I can conceive of, but to ruin his character, destroy his peace, and injure his health. He supports all their attacks with firmness, and his health appears to be very good." *

The report of Mr. Jefferson on commercial intercourse, was soon taken up in the House in a committee of the whole. A series of resolutions based on it, and relating to the privileges and restrictions of the commerce of the United States, were introduced by Mr. Madison, and became the subject of a warm and

* *Life of John Adams*, vol. i., p. 461.

acrimonious debate. The report upheld the policy of turning the course of trade from England to France, by discriminations in favor of the latter; and the resolutions were to the same purport. The idea was to oppose commercial resistance to commercial injury; to enforce a perfect commercial equality by retaliating impositions, assuming that the commercial system of Great Britain was hostile to the United States—a position strongly denied by some of the debaters.

Though the subject was, or might seem to be, of a purely commercial nature, it was inevitably mixed up with political considerations, according as a favorable inclination to England or France was apprehended. The debate waxed warm as it proceeded, with a strong infusion of bitterness. Fisher Ames stigmatized the resolutions as having *French* stamped upon the very face of them. Whereupon, Colonel Parker of Virginia wished that there was a stamp on the forehead of every one to designate whether he were for France or England. For himself, he would not be silent and hear that nation abused, to whom America was indebted for her rank as a nation. There was a burst of applause in the gallery; but the indecorum was rebuked by the galleries being cleared.

The debate, which had commenced on the 13th of January (1794), was protracted to the 3d of February, when the question being taken on the first resolution it was carried by a majority of only five, so nearly were parties divided. The further consideration of the remaining resolutions was postponed to March, when it was resumed, but, in consequence of the new complexion of affairs, was suspended without a decision.

The next legislative movement was also productive of a warm debate, though connected with a subject which appealed to the sympathies of the whole nation. Algerine corsairs had captured eleven American merchant vessels, and upwards of one hundred prisoners, and the regency manifested a disposition for further outrages. A bill was introduced into Congress proposing a force of six frigates, to protect the commerce of the United States against the cruisers of this piratical power. The bill met with strenuous opposition. The force would require time to prepare it; and would then be insufficient. It might be laying the foundation of a large permanent navy and a great public debt. It would be cheaper to purchase the friendship of Algiers with money, as was done by other nations of superior maritime force, or to purchase the protection of those

nations. It seems hardly credible at the present day, that such policy could have been urged before an American Congress, without provoking a burst of scorn and indignation; yet it was heard without any emotion of the kind; and, though the bill was eventually passed by both Houses, it was but by a small majority. It received the hearty assent of the President.

In the course of this session, fresh instances had come before the government of the mischievous activity and audacity of Genet; showing that, not content with compromising the neutrality of the United States at sea, he was attempting to endanger it by land. From documents received, it appeared that in November he had sent emissaries to Kentucky, to enroll American citizens in an expedition against New Orleans and the Spanish possessions, furnishing them with blank commissions for the purpose.* It was an enterprise in which the adventurous people of that State were ready enough to embark, through enthusiasm for the French nation and impatience at the delay of Spain to open the navigation of the Mississippi. Another expedition was to proceed against the Floridas; men for the purpose to be enlisted at the South, to rendez-

* *American State Papers*, ii., 36.

vous in Georgia, and to be aided by a body of Indians and by a French fleet, should one arrive on the coast. A proclamation from Governor Moultrie checked all such enlistments in South Carolina, but brought forth a letter from Genet to Mr. Jefferson, denying that he had endeavored to raise an armed force in that State for the service of the republic: "At the same time," adds he, "I am too frank to conceal from you that, authorized by the French nation to deliver brevets to such of your fellow-citizens who feel animated by a desire to serve the fairest of causes, I have accorded them to several brave republicans of South Carolina, whose intention appeared to me to be, in expatriating themselves, to go among the tribes of independent Indians, ancient friends and allies of France, to inflict if they could, in concert with them, the harm to Spaniards and Englishmen, which the governments of those two nations had the baseness to do for a long time to your fellow-citizens, under the name of these savages, the same as they have done recently under that of the Algerines."

Documents relating to these transactions were communicated to Congress by Washington, early in January. But, though the expedition set on foot in South Carolina had

been checked, it was subsequently reported that the one in Kentucky against Louisiana was still in progress and about to descend the Ohio.

These schemes showed such determined purpose, on the part of Genet, to undermine the peace of the United States, that Washington, without waiting a reply to the demand for his recall, resolved to keep no further terms with that headlong diplomat. The dignity, possibly the safety, of the United States depended upon immediate measures.

In a cabinet council it was determined to supersede Genet's diplomatic functions, deprive him of the consequent privileges, and arrest his person; a message to Congress, avowing such determination, was prepared, but at this critical juncture came despatches from Gouverneur Morris, announcing Genet's recall.

The French minister of foreign affairs had, in fact, reprobated the conduct of Genet as unauthorized by his instructions and deserving of punishment, and Mr. Fauchet, secretary of the executive council, was appointed to succeed him. Mr. Fauchet arrived in the United States in February.

About this time vigilance was required to guard against wrong from an opposite quarter. We have noticed the orders issued by Great

Britain to her cruisers in June, 1793, and the resentment thereby excited in the United States. On the 6th of the following month of November, she had given them additional instructions to detain all vessels laden with the produce of any colony belonging to France, or carrying supplies to any such colony, and to bring them, with their cargoes, to British ports, for adjudication in the British courts of admiralty.

Captures of American vessels were taking place in consequence of these orders, and heightening public irritation. They were considered indicative of determined hostility on the part of Great Britain, and they produced measures in Congress preparatory to an apprehended state of war. An embargo was laid, prohibiting all trade from the United States to any foreign place for the space of thirty days, and vigorous preparations for defense were adopted with but little opposition.

On the 27th of March, resolutions were moved that all debts due to British subjects be sequestered and paid into the treasury, as a fund to indemnify citizens of the United States for depredations sustained from British cruisers, and that all intercourse with Great Britain be interdicted until she had made compensation for these injuries, and until she should make surrender of the Western posts.

The popular excitement was intense. Meetings were held on the subject of British spoliations. "Peace or war" was the absorbing question. The partisans of France were now in the ascendant. It was scouted as pusillanimous any longer to hold terms with England. "No doubt," said they, "she despises the proclamation of neutrality, as an evidence of timidity; every motive of self-respect calls on the people of the United States to show a proper spirit."

It was suggested that those who were in favor of resisting British aggressions should mount the tri-colored cockade; and forthwith it was mounted by many; while a democratic society was formed to correspond with the one at Philadelphia, and aid in giving effect to these popular sentiments.

While the public mind was in this inflammable state, Washington received advices from Mr. Pinckney, the American minister in London, informing him that the British ministry had issued instructions to the commanders of armed vessels, revoking those of the 6th of November, 1793. Lord Grenville also, in conversation with Mr. Pinckney, had explained the real motives for that order, showing that, however oppressive in its execution, it had not been intended for the special vexation of American commerce.

Washington laid Pinckney's letter before Congress on the 4th of April. It had its effect on both parties; Federalists saw in it a chance of accommodating difficulties, and, therefore, opposed all measures calculated to irritate; the other party did not press their belligerent propositions to any immediate decision, but showed no solicitude to avoid a rupture.

Jefferson, though reputed to be the head of the French party, avowed in a letter to Madison his hope that war would not result, but that justice would be obtained in a peaceable way;* and he repeats the hope in a subsequent letter. "My countrymen," writes he, "are groaning under the insults of Great Britain. I hope some means will turn up of reconciling our faith and honor with peace. I confess to you, I have seen enough of one war never to wish to see another." †

"'T is as great an error," writes Hamilton, at the same time, "for a nation to overrate as to underrate itself. Presumption is as great a fault as timidity. 'T is our error to overrate ourselves and to underrate Great Britain; we forget how little we can annoy, how much we may be annoyed." ‡

* Jefferson's *Works*, vol. iv., p. 102.

† *Ibid*., vol. iv., p. 104. Letter to John Adams.

‡ Hamilton's *Works*, iv., 520.

The war cry, however, is too obvious a means of popular excitement to be readily given up. Busy partisans saw that the feeling of the populace was belligerent, and every means were taken by the press and the democratic societies to exasperate this feeling; according to them the crisis called, not for moderation, but for decision, for energy. Still, to adhere to a neutral position would argue tameness—cowardice! Washington, however, was too morally brave to be clamored out of his wise moderation by such taunts. He resolved to prevent a war, if possible, by an appeal to British justice, to be made through a special envoy, who should represent to the British government the injuries we had sustained from it in various ways, and should urge indemnification.

The measure was descried by the party favorable to France, as an undue advance to the British government; but they were still more hostile to it when it was rumored that Hamilton was to be chosen for the mission. A member of the House of Representatives addressed a strong letter to the President, deprecating the mission, but especially the reputed choice of the envoy. James Monroe, also, at that time a member of the Senate, remonstrated against the nomination of Hamilton as injurious to the public interest, and to the interest

of Washington himself, and offered to explain his reasons to the latter in a private interview.

Washington declined the interview, but requested Mr. Monroe, if possessed of any facts which would disqualify Mr. Hamilton for the mission, to communicate them to him in writing.

"Colonel Hamilton and others have been mentioned," adds he, "but no one is yet absolutely decided upon in my mind. But as much will depend, among other things, upon the abilities of the person sent, and his knowledge of the affairs of this country, and as I alone am responsible for a proper nomination, it certainly behooves me to name such a one as, in my judgment, combines the requisites for a mission so peculiarly interesting to the peace and happiness of this country."

Hamilton, however, aware of the "collateral obstacles" which existed with respect to himself, had resolved to advise Washington to drop him from the consideration and to fix upon another character; and recommended John Jay, the Chief Justice of the United States, as the man whom it would be advisable to send. "I think," writes he, "the business would have the best chance possible in his hands, and I flatter myself, that his mission would issue in

a manner that would produce the most important good to the nation." *

Mr. Jay was the person ultimately chosen. Washington, in his message, thus nominating an additional envoy to Great Britain, expressed undiminished confidence in the minister actually in London. "But a mission like this," observes he, "while it corresponds with the solemnity of the occasion, will announce to the world a solicitude for a friendly adjustment of our complaints and a reluctance to hostility. Going immediately from the United States, such an envoy will carry with him a full knowledge of the existing temper and sensibility of our country, and will thus be taught to vindicate our rights with firmness, and to cultivate peace with sincerity."

The nomination was approved by a majority of ten Senators.

By this sudden and decisive measure Washington sought to stay the precipitate impulses of public passion; to give time to put the country into a complete state of defense, and to provide such other measures as might be necessary if negotiation, in a reasonable time, should prove unsuccessful.†

Notwithstanding the nomination of the en-

* Hamilton's *Works*, vol. iv., p. 531.

† Letter to Edmund Randolph. *Writings*, x., 403.

voy, the resolution to cut off all intercourse with Great Britain passed the House of Representatives, and was only lost in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice-President, which was given, according to general belief, "not from a disinclination to the ulterior expedience of the measure, but from a desire," previously, "to try the effect of negotiation." *

While Washington was thus endeavoring to steer the vessel of state, amid the surges and blasts which were threatening on every side, Jefferson, who had hauled out of the storm, writes serenely from his retirement at Monticello, to his friend Tench Coxe at Paris:

"Your letters give a comfortable view of French affairs, and later events seem to confirm it. Over the foreign powers, I am convinced they will triumph completely, and I cannot but hope that that triumph, and the consequent disgrace of the invading tyrants, is destined, in order of events, to kindle the wrath of Europe against those who have dared to embroil them in such wickedness, and to bring, at length, kings, nobles, and priests, to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood. I am still warm whenever I think of these scoundrels, though I do it as seldom as I can, preferring infinitely

* Washington to Tobiar Lear. *Writings*, x., 401.

to contemplate the tranquil growth of my lucerne and potatoes. I have so completely withdrawn myself from these spectacles of usurpation and misrule, that I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month; and I feel myself infinitely the happier for it."*

* *Works*, iv., 104.

Chapter XXXI.

James Monroe Appointed Minister to France in Place of Gouverneur Morris Recalled—His Reception—Pennsylvania Insurrection—Proclamation of Washington—Perseverance of the Insurgents—Second Proclamation—The President Proceeds against them—General Morgan—Lawrence Lewis—Washington Arranges a Plan of Military Operations—Returns to Philadelphia, Leaving Lee in Command—Submission of the Insurgents—The President's Letter on the Subject to Jay, Minister at London.

THE French government having so promptly complied with the wishes of the American government in recalling Citizen Genet, requested, as an act of reciprocity, the recall of Gouverneur Morris, whose political sympathies were considered highly aristocratical. The request was granted accordingly, but Washington, in a letter to Morris, notifying him of his being superseded, assured him of his own undiminished confidence and friendship.

James Monroe, who was appointed in his place, arrived at Paris in a moment of great reaction. Robespierre had terminated his bloody career on the scaffold, and the reign of terror was at an end. The new minister from the United States was received in public by the Convention. The sentiments expressed by Monroe on delivering his credentials, were so completely in unison with the feelings of the moment, that the President of the Convention embraced him with emotion, and it was decreed that the American and French flags should be entwined and hung up in the hall of the Convention, in sign of the union and friendship of the two republics.

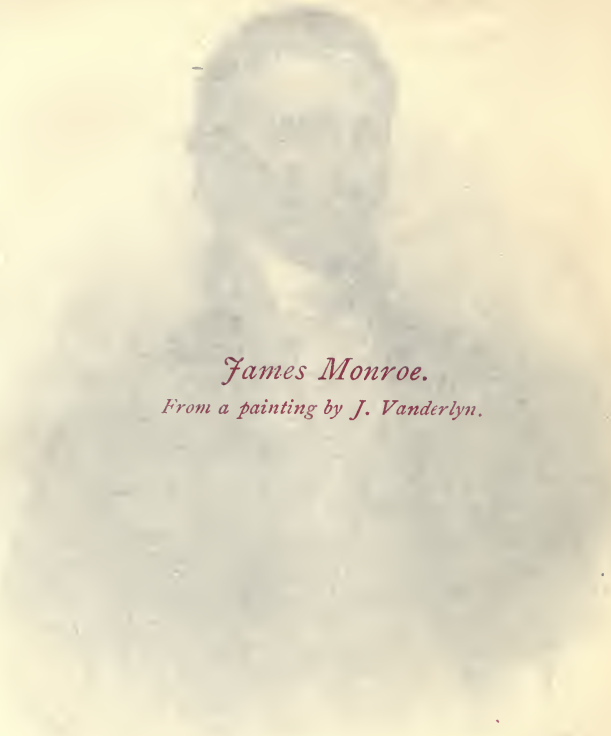
Chiming in with the popular impulse, Monroe presented the American flag to the Convention, on the part of his country. It was received with enthusiasm, and a decree was passed, that the national flag of France should be transmitted in return, to the government of the United States.

Washington, in the meantime, was becoming painfully aware that censorious eyes at home were keeping a watch upon his administration, and censorious tongues and pens were ready to cavil at every measure. "The affairs of this country cannot go wrong," writes he ironically to Gouverneur Morris; "there are

so many watchful guardians of them, and such infallible guides, that no one is at a loss for a director at every turn."

This is almost the only instance of irony to be found in his usually plain, direct correspondence, and to us is mournfully suggestive of that soreness and weariness of heart with which he saw his conscientious policy misunderstood or misrepresented, and himself becoming an object of party hostility.

Within three weeks after the date of this letter, an insurrection broke out in the western part of Pennsylvania on account of the excise law. We have already mentioned the riotous opposition this law had experienced. Bills of indictment had been found against some of the rioters. The marshal, when on the way to serve the processes issued by the court, was fired upon by armed men, and narrowly escaped with his life. He was subsequently seized and compelled to renounce the exercise of his official duties. The house of General Nevil, inspector of the revenue, was assailed, but the assailants were repulsed. They assembled in greater numbers; the magistrates and militia officers shrank from interfering, lest it should provoke a general insurrection; a few regular soldiers were obtained from the garrison at Fort Pitt. There was a parley. The



James Monroe.

From a painting by J. Vanderlyn.

J. Vandelyn
R. B. Hall

insurgents demanded that the inspector and his papers should be given up ; and the soldiers march out of the house and ground their arms. The demand being refused, the house was attacked, the outhouses set on fire, and the garrison was compelled to surrender. The marshal and inspector finally escaped out of the country ; descended the Ohio, and, by a circuitous route, found their way to the seat of government; bringing a lamentable tale of their misadventures.

Washington deprecated the result of these outrageous proceedings. "If the laws are to be so trampled upon with impunity," said he, "and a minority, a small one too, is to dictate to the majority, there is an end put, at one stroke, to republican government."

It was intimated that the insurgent district could bring seven thousand men into the field. Delay would only swell the growing disaffection. On the 7th of August, Washington issued a proclamation, warning the insurgents to disperse, and declaring that if tranquillity were not restored before the 1st of September, force would be employed to compel submission to the laws. To show that this was not an empty threat, he, on the same day, made a requisition on the governors of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, for mil-

itia to compose an army of twelve thousand men; afterwards augmented to fifteen thousand.

In a letter to the governor of Virginia (Light-Horse Harry Lee), he says: "I consider this insurrection as the first formidable fruit of the Democratic Societies, brought forth, I believe, too prematurely for their own views, which may contribute to the annihilation of them.

"That these societies were instituted by the artful and designing members (many of their body, I have no doubt, mean well, but know little of the real plan), primarily to sow among the people the seeds of jealousy and distrust of the government, by destroying all confidence in the administration of it, and that these doctrines have been budding and blowing ever since, is not new to any one who is acquainted with the character of their leaders, and has been attentive to their manœuvres. I early gave it as my opinion to the confidential characters around me, that if these societies were not counteracted (not by prosecutions, the ready way to make them grow stronger), or did not fall into disesteem from the knowledge of their origin, and the views with which they had been instituted by their father, Genet, for purposes well known to the government, they would shake the government to its foundation."

The insurgents manifesting a disposition to persevere in their rebellious conduct, the President issued a second proclamation on the 25th of September, describing in forcible terms, the perverse and obstinate spirit with which the lenient propositions of government had been met, and declaring his fixed purpose to reduce the refractory to obedience. Shortly after this he left Philadelphia for Carlisle, to join the army, then on its march to suppress the insurrection in the western part of Pennsylvania.

Just as Washington was leaving Philadelphia, a letter was put into his hands from Major-General Morgan. The proclamation had roused the spirit of that revolutionary veteran. He was on his way, he wrote, to join the expedition against the insurgents, having command of a division of the Virginia militia, of which General Lee was commander-in-chief.

Washington replied from Carlisle to his old companion in arms: "Although I regret the occasion which has called you into the field, I rejoice to hear you are there; and it is probable I may meet you at Fort Cumberland, whither I shall proceed as soon as I see the troops at this rendezvous in condition to advance. At that place, or at Bedford, my ulterior resolution must be taken, either to advance with the troops into the insurgent counties of this State,

or to return to Philadelphia for the purpose of meeting Congress the 3d of next month.

"Imperious circumstances alone can justify my absence from the seat of government, whilst Congress are in session; but if these, from the disposition of the people in the refractory counties, and the state of the information I expect to receive at the advanced posts, should appear to exist, the less must yield to the greater duties of my office, and I shall cross the mountains with the troops; if not, I shall place the command of the combined force under the orders of Governor Lee of Virginia, and repair to the seat of government."

We will here note that Lawrence Lewis, a son of Washington's sister, Mrs. Fielding Lewis, having caught the spirit of arms, accompanied Morgan as aide-de-camp on this expedition. The prompt zeal with which he volunteered into the service of his country was, doubtless, highly satisfactory to his uncle, with whom it will be seen, he was a great favorite.

On the 9th of October Washington writes from Carlisle to the Secretary of State: "The insurgents are alarmed, but not yet brought to their proper senses. Every means is devised by them and their friends and associates, to induce a belief that there is no necessity for

troops crossing the mountains, although we have information, at the same time, that part of the people there are obliged to embody themselves, to repel the insults of another part."

On the 10th, the Pennsylvania troops set out from Carlisle for their rendezvous at Bedford, and Washington proceeded to Williamsport, thence to go on to Fort Cumberland, the rendezvous of the Virginia and Maryland troops. He arrived at the latter place on the 16th of October, and found a respectable force assembled from those States, and learnt that fifteen hundred more from Virginia were at hand. All accounts agreed that the insurgents were greatly alarmed at the serious appearance of things. "I believe," writes Washington, "the eyes of all the well-disposed people of this country will soon be opened, and that they will clearly see the tendency, if not the design, of the leader of these self-created societies. As far as I have heard them spoken of, it is with strong reprobation."

At Bedford he arranged matters and settled a plan of military operations. The governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania were at the head of the troops of their respective States, but Governor Lee was to have the general command. This done, Washington prepared to shape his course for Philadelphia—

"but not," says he indignantly, "because the impertinence of Mr. Bache, or his correspondent, has undertaken to pronounce that I cannot, constitutionally, command the army, whilst Congress is in session."

In a letter to Governor Lee, on leaving him in command, he conveyed to the army the very high sense he entertained "of the enlightened and patriotic zeal for the Constitution and the laws which had led them cheerfully to quit their families, homes, and the comforts of private life, to undertake, and thus far to perform, a long and fatiguing march, and to encounter and endure the hardships and privations of a military life."

"No citizen of the United States," observes he, "can ever be engaged in a service more important to their country. It is nothing less than to consolidate and to preserve the blessings of that Revolution which, at much expense of blood and treasure, constituted us a free and independent nation."

His parting admonition is—"that every officer and soldier will constantly bear in mind, that he comes to support the laws, and that it would be peculiarly unbecoming in him to be, in any way, the infractor of them; that the essential principles of a free government confine the province of the military when called

forth on such occasions, to these two objects: first, to combat and to subdue all who may be found in arms in opposition to the national will and authority; secondly, to aid and support the civil magistrates in bringing offenders to justice. The dispensation of this justice belongs to the civil magistrates; and let it ever be our pride and our glory to leave the sacred deposit there inviolate."

Washington pushed on for Philadelphia, through deep roads and a three days' rain, and arrived there about the last of October. Governor Lee marched with the troops in two divisions, amounting to fifteen thousand men, into the western counties of Pennsylvania. This great military array extinguished at once the kindling elements of a civil war, "by making resistance desperate." At the approach of so overwhelming a force the insurgents laid down their arms, and gave assurance of submission, and craved the clemency of government. It was extended to them. A few were tried for treason, but were not convicted, but as some spirit of discontent was still manifest, Major-General Morgan was stationed with a detachment, for the winter, in the disaffected region.

The paternal care with which Washington watched, at all times, over the welfare of the

country, was manifested in a letter to General Hamilton, who had remained with the army. "Press the governors to be pointed in ordering the officers under their respective commands to march back with their respective corps; and to see that the inhabitants meet with no disgraceful insults or injuries from them."

It must have been a proud satisfaction to Washington to have put down, without an effusion of blood, an insurrection which, at one time, threatened such serious consequences. In a letter to Mr. Jay, who had recently gone minister to England, he writes: "The insurrection in the western counties of this State will be represented differently, according to the wishes of some and the prejudices of others, who may exhibit it as an evidence of what has been predicted, 'that we are unable to govern ourselves.' Under this view of the subject, I am happy in giving it to you as the general opinion, that this event, having happened at the time it did, was fortunate, although it will be attended with considerable expense."

After expressing his opinion that the "self-created societies" who were laboring to effect some revolution in the government, were the fomenters of these western disturbances, he adds: "It has afforded an occasion for the people of this country to show their abhorrence

of the result and their attachment to the Constitution and the laws; for I believe that five times the number of militia that was required would have come forward, if it had been necessary, in support of them.

"The spirit which blazed out on this occasion, as soon as the object was fully understood and the lenient measures of the government were made known to the people, deserves to be communicated. There are instances of general officers going at the head of a single troop, and of light companies; of field-officers, when they came to the place of rendezvous, and found no command for them in that grade, turning into the ranks and proceeding as private soldiers, under their own captains; and of numbers possessing the first fortunes in the country, standing in the ranks as private men, and marching day by day, with their knapsacks and haversacks at their backs, sleeping on straw with a single blanket in a soldier's tent, during the frosty nights which we have had, by way of example to others. Nay, more, many young Quakers, of the first families, character, and property, not discouraged by the elders, have turned into the ranks and marched with the troops.

"These things have terrified the insurgents, who had no conception that such a spirit pre-

vailed; but while the thunder only rumbled at a distance, were boasting of their strength and wishing for and threatening the militia by turns, intimating that the arms they should take from them would soon become a magazine in their hands."

Chapter XXXII.

Washington's Denunciation of Self-Created Societies —Not Relished by Congress—Campaign of General Wayne—Hamilton Reports a Plan for the Redemption of the Public Debt—And Retires from his Post as Secretary of the Treasury—Is Succeeded by Oliver Wolcott—Resignation of Knox—Succeeded by Timothy Pickering—Close of the Session.

IN his speech on the opening of Congress (November 19th), Washington, in adverting to the insurrection in Western Pennsylvania, did not hesitate to denounce "certain self-created societies" as "fomenters of it." After detailing its commencement and progress, he observes: "While there is cause to lament that occurrences of this nature should have disgraced the name or interrupted the tranquillity of any part of our community, or should have diverted to a new application any portion of the public resources, there are not wanting real and substantial consolations for

the misfortune. It has demonstrated, that our prosperity rests on solid foundations; by furnishing an additional proof that my fellow-citizens understand the true principles of government and liberty; that they feel their inseparable union: that, notwithstanding all the devices which have been used to sway them from their interest and duty, they are now as ready to maintain the authority of the laws against licentious invasions, as they were to defend their rights against usurpation. It has been a spectacle, displaying to the highest advantage the value of republican government, to behold the most and least wealthy of our citizens standing in the same ranks as private soldiers; pre-eminently distinguished by being the army of the Constitution; undeterred by a march of three hundred miles over rugged mountains, by the approach of an inclement season, or by any other discouragement. Nor ought I to omit to acknowledge the efficacious and patriotic co-operation which I have experienced from the chief magistrates of the States to which my requisitions have been addressed.

"To every description, indeed, of citizens, let praise be given; but let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the Con-

stitution of the United States. Let them cherish it, too, for the sake of those who, from every clime, are daily seeking a dwelling in our land. And when, in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who are careless of consequences, and, disregarding the unerring truth, that those who arouse cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated from ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government."

This denunciation of the "self-created societies" was a bold step, by which he was sure to incur their resentment. It was not relished by some members of the Senate, but the majority gave it their approval. In the House, where the opposition party was the most powerful, this passage of the President's speech gave rise to much altercation, and, finally, the majority showed their disapprobation by passing it over in silence in the address voted in reply.

The "self-created-societies," however, which had sprung up in various parts of the Union, had received their death-blow; they soon became odious in the public eye, and gradually

disappeared; following the fate of the Jacobin clubs in France.

It was with great satisfaction that Washington had been able to announce favorable intelligence of the campaign of General Wayne against the hostile Indians west of the Ohio. That brave commander had conducted it with a judgment and prudence little compatible with the hare-brained appellation he had acquired by his rash exploits during the Revolution. Leaving his winter encampment on the Ohio, in the spring (of 1794), he had advanced cautiously into the wild country west of it; skirmishing with bands of lurking savages, as he advanced, and establishing posts to keep up communication and secure the transmission of supplies. It was not until the 8th of August that he arrived at the junction of the rivers Au Glaize and Miami, in a fertile and populous region, where the Western Indians had their most important villages. Here he threw up some works, which he named Fort Defiance. Being strengthened by eleven hundred mounted volunteers from Kentucky, his force exceeded that of the savage warriors who had collected to oppose him, which scarcely amounted to two thousand men. These, however, were strongly encamped in the vicinity of Fort Miami, a British post, about thirty miles dis-

tant, and far within the limits of the United States, and seemed prepared to give battle, expecting, possibly, to be aided by the British garrison. Wayne's men were eager for a fight, but he, remembering the instructions of government, restrained his fighting propensities. In a letter to his old comrade Knox, Secretary of War, he writes: "Though now prepared to strike, I have thought proper to make the enemy a last overture of peace, nor am I without hopes that they will listen to it."

His overture was ineffectual; or rather, the reply he received was such as to leave him in doubt of the intentions of the enemy. He advanced, therefore, with the precautions he had hitherto observed, hoping to be met in the course of his march by deputies on peaceful missions.

On the 20th, being arrived near to the enemy's position, his advanced guard was fired upon by an ambush of the enemy concealed in a thicket, and was compelled to retreat. The general now ordered an attack of horse and foot upon the enemy's position; the Indians were roused from their lair with the point of the bayonet; driven, fighting for more than two miles, through thick woods, and pursued with great slaughter, until within gunshot of the British fort. "We remained,"

writes the general, "three days and nights on the banks of the Miami, in front of the field of battle, during which time all the houses and corn were consumed or otherwise destroyed, for a considerable distance both above and below Fort Miami; and we were within pistol-shot of the garrison of that place, who were compelled to remain quiet spectators of this general devastation and conflagration."

It was trusted that this decisive battle, and the wide ravages of villages and fields of corn with which it was succeeded, would bring the Indians to their senses, and compel them to solicit the peace which they had so repeatedly rejected.

In his official address to Congress, Washington had urged the adoption of some definite plan for the redemption of the public debt. A plan was reported by Mr. Hamilton, 20th January, 1795, which he had prepared on the basis of the actual revenues, for the further support of public credit. The report embraced a comprehensive view of the system which he had pursued, and made some recommendations, which after much debate were adopted.

So closed Mr. Hamilton's labors as Secretary of the Treasury. He had long meditated a

retirement from his post, the pay of which was inadequate to the support of his family, but had postponed it, first, on account of the accusations brought against him in the second Congress, and of which he awaited the investigation; secondly, in consequence of events which rendered the prospect of a continuance of peace precarious. But these reasons no longer operating, he gave notice, on his return from the Western country, that on the last day of the ensuing month of January he should give in his resignation. He did so, and received the following note from Washington on the subject: "After so long an experience of your public services, I am naturally led, at this moment of your departure from office (which it has always been my wish to prevent), to review them. In every relation which you have borne to me, I have found that my confidence in your talents, exertions, and integrity has been well placed. I the more freely render this testimony of my approbation, because I speak from opportunities of information which cannot deceive me, and which furnish satisfactory proof of your title to public regard.

"My most earnest wishes for your happiness will attend you in your retirement, and you may assure yourself of the sincere esteem,

regard, and friendship, of, dear, sir, your affectionate," etc.*

Hamilton's reply manifests his sense of the kindness of this letter. "As often as I may recall the vexations I have endured," writes he, "your approbation will be a great and precious consolation. It was not without a struggle that I yielded to the very urgent motives which impelled me to relinquish a station in which I could hope to be in any degree instrumental in promoting the success of an administration under your direction. . . . Whatever may be my destination hereafter, I entreat you to be persuaded (not the less from my having been sparing in professions) that I shall never cease to render a just tribute to those eminent and excellent qualities, which have been already productive of so many blessings to your country; that you will always have my fervent wishes for your public and personal felicity, and that it will be my pride to cultivate a continuance of that esteem, regard, and friendship, of which you do me the honor to assure me. With true respect and affectionate attachment, I have the honor to be," etc.†

Hamilton was succeeded in office by Oliver Volcott of Connecticut, a man of judgment and ability, who had served as comptroller,

* *Writings*, xi., 16. † *Writings*, xi., 19.

and was familiar with the duties of the office.

Knox, likewise, had given in his resignation at the close of the month of December. "After having served my country nearly twenty years," writes he to Washington, "the greatest portion of which under your immediate auspices, it is with extreme reluctance that I find myself constrained to withdraw from so honorable a station. But the natural and powerful claims of a numerous family will no longer permit me to neglect their essential interests. In whatever situation I shall be, I shall recollect your confidence and kindness, with all the fervor and purity of affection of which a grateful heart is susceptible."

"I cannot suffer you," replies Washington, "to close your public service, without uniting with the satisfaction which must arise in your own mind from a conscious rectitude, my most perfect persuasions that you have deserved well of your country.

"My personal knowledge of your exertions, whilst it authorizes me to hold this language, justifies the sincere friendship which I have ever borne for you, and which will accompany you in every situation of life; being, with affectionate regard, always yours," etc.

There was always a kindly warmth in Washington's expressions towards the buoyant

General Knox. Knox was succeeded in the War Department by Colonel Timothy Pickering, at that time postmaster-general.

The session of Congress closed on the 3d of March, 1795.

END OF VOLUME VII.

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

BOOKS REQUESTED BY ANOTHER BORROWER
ARE SUBJECT TO RECALL AFTER ONE WEEK.
RENEWED BOOKS ARE SUBJECT TO
IMMEDIATE RECALL

LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

Book Slip–Series 458

63800

PS
2050
E91
v.29

Irving, W.
Works.